ETHEL MORTON AT SWEETBRIER LODGE

The Ethel Morton Books

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ETHEL MORTON AT SWEETBRIER LODGE

BY

MABELL S. C. SMITH

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ETHEL MORTON AT SWEETBRIER LODGE

CHAPTER I

A NEW CRAFT

"CAREFULLY! O, do be careful, Ethel Brown! I'm so afraid I'll drop one of them!"

It was Ethel Blue Morton speaking to her cousin, who was helping her and their other cousin, Dorothy Smith, take Dicky Morton's newly hatched chickens out of the incubator and put them into the brooder.

"I *have* dropped one," exclaimed Dorothy. "Poor little dinky thing! It didn't hurt it a bit, though. See, it's running about as chipper as ever."

"Are you counting 'em?" demanded Dicky, whose small hands were better suited than those of the girls for making the transfer that was to establish the chicks in their new habitation.

"Yes," answered all three in chorus.

"Here's one with a twisted leg. He must have fallen off the tray when he was first hatched," cried Ethel Brown.

"He lookth pretty well. I gueth he'll live if I

feed him by himthelf tho the throng ones won't crowd him away from the feed panth," said Dicky, examining the cripple, for in spite of his small supply of seven years he had learned from his big brother Roger and from his grandfather Emerson a great deal about the use of an incubator and the care of young chickens.

"That's a good hatch for this time of year," Ethel Brown announced when she added together the numbers which each handler reported to her. "A hundred and thirty-seven."

"Hear their little beaks tapping the wooden floor," Ethel Blue said, calling their attention to the behavior of the just-installed little fowls who were making themselves entirely at home with extraordinary promptness.

"They take naturally to oatmeal flakes, don't they?" commented Dorothy. "I always thought the old hen taught the chicks to scratch, and there's a little chap scratching as vigorously as if he had been taking lessons ever since he was born."

"They don't need lessons. Scratching is as natural as eating to them. Hear them hum?"

They all listened, smiling at the note of contentment that buzzed gently from the greedy groups of crowding chicks. As the oatmeal disappeared the chickens looked about them for shelter and discovered the strips of cloth that did duty for the maternal wings. Rushing beneath them they cuddled side by side in the covered part of the brooder.

"Look at that one tucking his head under his

wing like a grown-up hen!" exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"I'll have to turn the lamp up a little higher tho they won't crowd and hurt each other," Dicky decided.

"I'd wait a minute until they begin to warm the whole of their house by the warmth from their bodies," urged Ethel Brown, and her brother agreed that there was no need of haste, but he watched them closely until he saw that they were not trampling on each other's backs or sitting down hard on each other's heads.

"When will they come out again?" asked Dorothy, who had never seen an incubator and brooder in operation before and who was immensely interested.

"When they are hungry."

"How soon will that be?"

"In about two hours. They're a good deal like babies."

"And is this brooder a really good step-mother?"

"It's a foster-mother," corrected Ethel Blue. "It isn't anything so horrid as a step-mother."

"O, I don't think step-mothers are horrid," objected Dorothy.

"Yeth, they are," insisted Dicky. "All the fairy stories say they're cruel."

"O, fairy stories," sniffed Dorothy.

"I imagine fairy stories are right about step-mothers," insisted Ethel Blue.

"Did you ever know one?" asked Dorothy.

"No, I never did; but I have a feeling that

they couldn't love a child that wasn't their own."

"Why not?" demanded Ethel Brown. "Mother loves you just as well as she does her own children and you're only her niece."

"Not her own niece, either — Uncle Roger's niece," corrected Ethel Blue; "but then, Aunt Marion is a darling."

"I don't see why a step-mother shouldn't be a darling."

"I don't see why she shouldn't be but I don't believe she ever is," and Ethel Blue stuck to her opinion.

"Well, there aren't any 'steps' around this family, so we can't tell by our own experience," cried Dorothy, "and we've got this chicken family moved into its new house, so let's go and see what the workmen are doing at our new house."

Dorothy's mother had been planning for several months to build a house on a lot of land on the same street that they were living on now, but farther away from the Mortons' and nearer the farm where lived the Mortons' grandfather and grandmother, Mr. and Mrs. Emerson. The contractor had been at work only a few days.

"He had just finished staking off the ground when I was there the other afternoon," said Ethel Brown.

"He's way ahead of that now," Dorothy reported as they walked on, three abreast across the sidewalk, their blue serge suits all alike, their Tipperary hats set at the same angle on their heads, and only the different colors of their eyes and hair distinguishing

them to a careless observer. "He told me yesterday that the whole cellar would be dug by this afternoon and they would be beginning to put in the concrete wall."

"Where?"

"The cellar wall."

"I thought cellar walls were made of stone."

"Sometimes they are, but when there isn't stone all cut, concrete is more convenient and cheaper, too."

"And it lasts forever, I was reading the other day."

"I should say it did. Those old Pyramids in Egypt are partly made of concrete, they think, and they are three or four thousand years old."

"Does Aunt Louise expect her house to last three or four thousand years?"

"She wants it durable; and fireproof, any way, because we're some distance from the engine house."

"If we watch this house grow it will be almost like building it with our own hands, won't it?" exclaimed Ethel Brown, for, although the house was her aunt's, Mrs. Smith had made all the cousins feel that she wanted them to have a share in the pleasure that she and Dorothy were having in making a shelter for themselves after their many years of wandering. She and her daughter consulted over every part of the plans and they had often asked the opinion of the Mortons, so that they all had come to say "our house" quite as if it were to belong to them.

As they approached the knoll which they had been calling "our house lot" for several months, they saw that the gravel for the concrete was being hauled to the top of the hill where the bags of sand and cement had already been unloaded and a small concrete mixer set up.

"They do things fast, don't they!" exclaimed Dorothy. "There's Mr. Anderson, the contractor."

A tall, substantial Scotsman bowed to them as they reached the top of the hill.

"Have you come to superintend us, Miss Dorothy?" he asked pleasantly. "We're going to make all our preparations for mixing the concrete to-day, and then we'll start up the machine to-morrow."

"You won't have the cellar wall all built by to-morrow after school, will you?" asked Dorothy anxiously. "We want to see how you do it."

"It won't take long to do this small cellar so you'd better hurry right here from your luncheon," Mr. Anderson returned as he walked away to attend to the placing of the pile of gravel, and to lay a friendly hand on the sides of the panting horses.

"If your driveway doesn't wind around more than this road that the hauling men have made all your friends' horses will be puffing like mills when they reach the top," Ethel Blue warned her cousin.

"Mother and the architect and a landscape gardener have it all drawn on paper," Dorothy responded. "It's going to sweep around the foot of

the knoll and come gently up the side and lie quite flat on top of the ridge for a little way before it reaches the front door."

"That will be a long walk for people on foot."

"Ethel Blue is speaking for herself," laughed Ethel Brown.

"And for Dorothy, too. She'll walk most of the time even if Aunt Louise is going to set up a car."

"There's to be a footpath over there," Dorothy indicated a side of the hill away from the proposed driveway. "It will be a short cut and it's going to be walled in with shrubs so it won't be seen from the driveway."

"What would be the harm if you could see it from the driveway?"

"O, the lines would interfere, the landscape artist said. You mustn't have things confused, you know," and she shook her head as if she knew a great deal about the subject.

"I suppose it would look all mixy and queer if you should see the grounds from an airship," guessed Ethel Brown, "but I don't see what difference it would make from the ground."

"I guess it would be ugly or he wouldn't be so particular about it," insisted Dorothy. "That's his business — to make grounds look lovely."

"I think I can see what he means," ventured Ethel Blue, who knew something about drawing and design. "I watched Aunt Marion's dressmaker draping an evening gown for her one day. She made certain lines straight and other lines curved,

but the two kinds of lines didn't cross each other any old way; she put them in certain places so that they would each make the other kind of line look better and not make the general effect confusing."

"Don't you remember how it was when we were planning Dorothy's garden on top of this ridge, back of the house and the garage?" Ethel Brown reminded them. "We had to draw several positions for the different beds because some of our plans looked perfectly crazy — just a mess of square beds and oblong beds and round beds."

"They made you dizzy — I remember. We found we had to follow Roger's advice and make them balance."

"Helen says there's a lot of geometry in laying out a garden. I guess she's right."

Helen and Roger were Ethel Brown's older sister and brother. They were in the high school.

They had come now to the excavation for the cellar and watched the Italian laborers throwing out the last shovelfuls of earth.

"They're very particular about making the earth wall smooth," commented Ethel Brown.

"I imagine they have to if the wall is to be concrete," returned Dorothy.

"They've cut it under queerly at the foot on both sides; what's that for?"

"I haven't the dimmest," answered Dorothy briefly. "Let's ask Mr. Anderson."

"You'd find it hard to stand up straight if you had only a leg to stand on and not a foot," that gen-

tleman answered to the question. "That concrete foot gives a good solid foundation, and it helps to repel the frost if that should get into the ground so deep. Do you see the planks the men are setting up twelve inches in from the bank?"

The girls nodded.

"They are making a fence all around the cellar you see; that is to keep the concrete in place when it is poured in, and to give it shape."

"Is it soft like mud?"

"It is made of one part of cement and two and one-half parts of sand and five parts of gravel. Do you cook?"

They all nodded again.

"When you come to-morrow you'll see the mixing machine making a stiff batter of those three things — cement and sand and gravel."

"It must be like putting raisins in a plum pudding," suggested Ethel Brown. "You have to be careful the stones — the raisins — don't all sink to the bottom or get bunched together in one place."

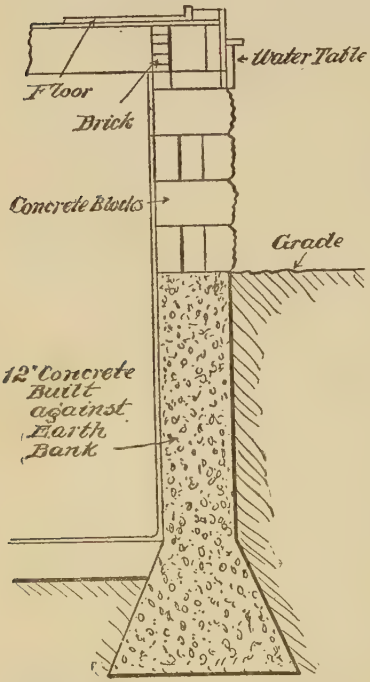
"That's the idea," smiled Mr. Anderson. "All those things and water go into one end of the mixer and they come out at the other end concrete in a soft state. Then the men shovel the stuff into the space between the fence and the earth bank, making sure that that widening trench at the foot is chock full and they thump it down and let it 'set.'"

"I think the cellar will look very ugly with that old plank wall," decided Dorothy seriously.

"The planks will be taken away."

"Won't the concrete show lines where the cracks between the boards were?"

"Do you see those rolls of heavy paper over there? The planks will be lined with that so that the concrete will come against a perfectly smooth surface. When the wood is taken away the men will go over it with a smoothing tool and when they have finished even your particular eye will see nothing to take exception to."



The Foundation Wall of Sweetbrier Lodge as Mr. Anderson Drew It

"O, I knew it would be right somehow," murmured Dorothy, who was afraid she had hurt Mr. Anderson's feelings. "I just didn't know how you managed it."

"Here's the way the end of the wall would look if you could slice down right through it," and the contractor took out his notebook and drew a cross section of the concrete wall showing its widened foot.

"What's the floor to be made of?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Concrete — four inches of it," answered Mr. Anderson promptly. "It will slope a trifle toward this end, and there a drainage pipe will be laid to carry off any water used in washing the floor. Then a layer of cement will go on top of the concrete."

"What's that for?"

"To make it all smooth. It will be rounded up at the corners and sides where it joins the walls, so there won't be any chance for the dust to collect."

"The cellar in our house is awfully damp," remarked Ethel Brown. "Sometimes you can see the water dripping down the stones."

"The walls and the floor of this cellar will be waterproofed with a mixture of rich cement and sand mortar, and I think you'll find, young ladies, that you'll have a cellar that'll be hard to beat."

The contractor slapped his notebook emphatically and beamed at them so amiably that they felt the greatest confidence in what he proposed.

"Any way, I haven't anything better to suggest," said Dorothy dryly.

Mr. Anderson walked off, giving a roar of amusement as he left them.

"Where does the sun rise from here?" asked Ethel Blue as she stood at the spot where was to be the front of the house, and gazed about her. "Does the house face directly south?"

"No, it faces just half way between south and west. The corners of the house point to north,

south, east and west. Mother said that if the front was due south the back would be due north and she didn't want a whole side of her house facing north."

"It does have a chilly sound," shivered Ethel Brown.

"With a point stretching toward the north the rooms that have a northern exposure will also have the morning sun and the afternoon sun."

"I know Aunt Louise will have her dining room where the morning sun will shine in."

"Yes, *ma'am,*" returned Dorothy emphatically. "It makes you feel better all day if you eat your breakfast in the sunshine. By this plan of Mother's every room in the house will have direct sunshine at some part of the day."

"It's great," approved Ethel Blue. "Can't we ask Mr. Anderson about making a bird's bath out of cement?" she inquired. "Ethel Brown and I saw a beauty at Mrs. Schermerhorn's and perhaps he'd let us have some of the concrete to-morrow when the men are mixing it, and we can try to make one."

The girls raced over to the spot where the contractor was just about to get into his Ford, and stopped him.

"Would you mind letting us have a little concrete to-morrow to make a bird's bath with?" begged Dorothy breathlessly.

"A bird's bath?" repeated Mr. Anderson. "How are you going to make it?"

"Couldn't we put some concrete in a pan and

squeeze another pan down on to it and let it harden?"

"Why, yes, something like that," returned Mr. Anderson slowly.

"Do you want to make it yourselves?"

"Yes, indeed," all three girls cried in chorus.

He smiled at their enthusiasm and offered a suggestion.

"I suppose you want the bird's bath for your garden, Miss Dorothy; — why don't you make a little pool for the garden?"

"Oh, could we?"

"If you could get a tub and lay down a flooring of concrete and then put in another tub enough smaller so that there would be a space between the walls, then you could fill the space with concrete. When it set, you could take out the inner tub after two or three days and turn the concrete out of the outer tub and there you'd have a concrete tub that you could move about."

"That sounds great," beamed Dorothy, "but wouldn't it be awfully heavy?"

"Here's a better way, then. If you can make up your mind exactly where you want to have it in your garden you can have a hole dug, lay down your floor of concrete and put your small tub on it."

"I see — then you fill the space between the tub and the earth with concrete."

"Precisely; thump it down hard and let it stand untouched for a while. Then take away your tub, and there you are again."

"You can't make the concrete floor and leave it, can you?"

"No, indeed. You must have everything ready to do the whole thing at once. Put in your tub which is to be your mold, while the floor is still plastic —"

"Eh?" inquired Ethel Brown.

"Soft enough to mold; and then pour in the walls right off quick. You can't fool round when you're working with concrete."

"How can we keep the water fresh in the tub?" asked Ethel Blue of Dorothy.

Dorothy paused, not knowing what to say.

"It would be fun to keep gold fish in it," she said, "but they would have to have fresh water, wouldn't they?" She turned appealingly to Mr. Anderson.

"That's not hard to manage," he said. "You can put a bit of broomstick between the earth wall and the outer wall of your tub-mold and pour the concrete around it. When the concrete has hardened you pull out the stick and there is a hole. Then you can have a drain dug that will tap that hole on the outside and carry off the water through a few lengths of drain pipe."

"What's to prevent the water running off all the time?" Ethel Blue wanted to know.

"Keep a plug in it," answered the contractor briefly. "And there should be waterproofing stuff mixed with the materials. You have your gardener dig a hole in the garden," he said, adding, "don't forget to have plenty of grease."

"What's that for?"

"Why do you grease your cake pans?"

"So the cake won't stick."

"Same here. On the cellar wall we lined the inside of the wooden forms with paper. That isn't so easy with round forms, so you grease them."

"I never thought there was any likeness between concrete and cooking," laughed Ethel Brown as the girls watched Mr. Anderson's skill in taking his little car over the rough ground around the cellar excavation, "but there seems to be plenty."

"Let's chase off and see if we can collect the things we shall need to-morrow," urged Dorothy. "I'll have to find Patrick and bring him here and show him just where to dig the hole."

"Where are you going to dig the hole?"

"I think just in the open place on top of the ridge."

"I wouldn't," objected Ethel Brown.

"Why not?"

"Won't it be too warm in summer? If you're going to have gold fish you don't want to boil them."

"The water would get pretty hot in the sun, wouldn't it?" considered her cousin. "What do you think of a place under that tree?"

"It ought not to be too near the tree because the roots will grow out a long way from the trunk of the tree and they might get under the pool and break up the concrete."

"Oh, could a tender little thing like a root break concrete that's as hard as stone?"

"It certainly can. Grandfather showed me a crack in a concrete wall of his on the farm that was made by the root of a big tree not far off."

"Well, then we can't have our pool anywhere near a tree. A shrub wouldn't hurt it, though; why can't it go near those shrubs that are going to separate the flower garden from the vegetable garden?"

"That place would be all right because there's a tall spruce there that throws a shadow over the shrubs for a part of the day. That's all you need; you don't want to take away all the sunshine from the pool."

So the exact spot was decided on and marked so that Patrick should make no mistake, and then the girls rushed off on a search for shallow basins and a tub.

CHAPTER II

PLAYING WITH CONCRETE

IT was not the Ethels and Dorothy alone who appeared at the " new place " the next afternoon to make the experiments with concrete. Helen, Ethel Brown's elder sister, and her friend, Margaret Hancock, of Glen Point, were so interested in the younger girls' account of what they were going to do with Mr. Anderson's help that they came too.

As they puffed up the steep knoll on which the new house was to stand they stopped beside the cellar hole to see what progress had been made since the day before.

" They have just frisked along! " Dorothy exclaimed when she saw that not only was the inside fence-mold all built but that the concrete floor was laid and that the men were pouring the mixture in between the planks and the earth wall and pounding it down as they poured.

" Mr. Anderson said ' you can't fool round when you're working with concrete,' " Ethel Brown repeated. " They aren't, are they? "

The men were all working as fast as they could move, some of them shovelling the materials into the mixer, others running the machine, others wheel-

ing the wet concrete in iron barrows to the men at the edge of the cellar who tamped it down as fast as it was poured into the narrow space that defined the growing wall.

"When it is full, way up to the top, what happens next?" Dorothy inquired of Mr. Anderson who came over to where they were standing.

"Then we're going to build on it a three foot wall of concrete blocks to support the upper part of the house."

"That's the wall that has the cellar windows in it?"

"Yes."

"Then do make good big ones; Mother likes a bright cellar," urged Dorothy.

"We're going to make her a beauty," promised the contractor. "Come up into your garden now and let's get this concrete work up there done. Here, Luigi," he called to an Italian, "bring us a load of concrete over there," and he waved his hand in the direction of the spot where Patrick had dug the hole for the tub.

They all examined the hole with care and the Ethels fitted in the tub and found that their digger had done his work skilfully, since there were just about three inches between the earth and the tub all around. They pulled the tub out again and under Mr. Anderson's direction they greased it thoroughly.

"We want to do every bit we can ourselves," they insisted when he suggested that Luigi might do that part for them.

"Don't forget the hole for the drainage," he reminded them. "Have you got your stick? And on which side are you going to have that?"

They surveyed the ground about the hole and decided that a drainage pipe might run a few inches underground for a short distance and discharge itself at the edge of a bank below which a vegetable garden was to lie.

The Way the Pool Looked When It Was Done

"If you're careful what you plant there it will be an advantage to the ground to have this dampening once in a while," said Mr. Anderson, who was something of a gardener. "There won't be enough water to drown out any of your plants."

Luigi emptied a load of concrete into the hole and while he was gone to get a new supply the girls thumped it down hard, fitted in the greased tub and wedged a bit of broomstick which Roger, Ethel Brown's brother, had cut for Dorothy. into the space between the tub and the earth just at the top of the

concrete flooring. When Luigi came back they were ready to thump as he poured and three loads filled up the space entirely.

"Now, then, Luigi, will bring you one of the smoothing tools that the men over there are using and you can make the top look even," and Mr. Anderson gave more instructions to the Italian.

"It will be pretty to have some plants at the edge so they'll bend over and see themselves in the water," suggested Margaret.

"I should think there must be some water plants that would grow inside without much trouble," Ethel Blue said.

"We must look that up; they'd probably need a little soil of some sort," Helen reminded them.

"They'd be awfully pretty," said Dorothy complacently. "Don't you seem to see it — with gold fish swimming around among the stems?"

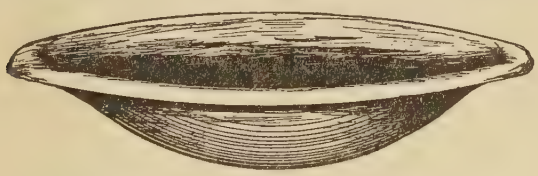
"Dicky might lend us his old turtle," laughed Ethel Brown. "He's tired of taking care of it. You could put a stick in here partly above the water, for him to sun himself on. I don't see why he wouldn't be quite happy here."

Dicky's turtle was a family joke. Dicky had found him two years before and had taken him home thinking he was a piece of stone. His excitement and terror when the stone lying on the library table stuck out first a head and then one leg after another to the number of four, had never been forgotten by the people who saw him at this thrilling moment.

"Now for your bird's bath," Mr. Anderson re-

minded his pupils. "You have to work fast, you know."

Dorothy brought out her two shallow basins, one smaller than the other. The larger had its inside well greased and the smaller was thoroughly rubbed over on its under side. Into the larger they poured about an inch of concrete and then squeezed the



The Bird's Bath

smaller dish into it, but not so sharply that it cut through. They filled in the crack between the two, pushing and patting the mixture into place, and they smoothed the edge so that it turned over the rim of the larger bowl before they cut it off evenly all around with a wire.

"There," said Mr. Anderson as he watched them. "We'll see what will come from that. It might be better done —" at which the girls all pulled long faces —"but also, it might be worse, or I'm very much mistaken."

"I wish we could make some garden furniture," sighed Dorothy, holding up her dripping hands helplessly, but at the same time gazing with joy at their new manufacture.

"You could if you would make the forms," said Mr. Anderson. "All you need to do is to make a

bench inside of another bench and fill the space between with concrete."

"That sounds easy, but if you were a girl, Mr. Anderson, you might find it a little hard to make the forms."

"We can all drive nails," insisted Ethel Brown stoutly. "I believe I'll try."

But the others laughed at her and reminded her that she would have to drive the nails through rather heavy planking, so she gave up the notion.

"What are the walls going to be made of?" Margaret asked Dorothy.

"Something fireproof, Mother said, but I don't know what she finally decided on. I'll ask Mr. Anderson."

"Plaster on hollow tile," the contractor answered absent mindedly over his shoulder, as he walked briskly before them back to the cellar.

The girls saw that he was too full of business now to pay any more attention to them, so they thanked him for giving them so much time and made some investigations on their own account among the piles of material lying about on the grounds.

"I wonder if this could be 'hollow-tile,'" Ethel Blue said to the rest as she came across a stack of strange-looking pieces of brown earthenware.

"It's certainly hollow," returned Ethel Brown, "but I always supposed tiles were flat things. That's a tile Mother sets the teapot on to keep the heat from harming the polish of the table."

They stood about the pile of brown, square-edged

pipes, roughly glazed inside and out, through whose length ran three square holes. They asked two workmen as they passed what they were. One said "Hollow tile," and the other, "Terra-cotta."

"I suspect they're both right," Helen decided. "Probably they're hollow tile made of terra-cotta."

"But I thought terra-cotta was lighter brown and smooth. They make little images out of terra-cotta," insisted Dorothy.

"I've seen those," agreed Margaret, "but I suppose there can be different qualities of terra-cotta just as there are different qualities of china."

"This stuff is fireproof, any way," explained Dorothy. "I remember now hearing Mother and the architect talking about it. And they said something about a 'dead air space.' That must mean the holes."

"What's dead air space for?" inquired Ethel Blue.

"I think it dries up the dampness, or keeps it out so that it doesn't get into the house."

"These are useful old blocks, then, even if they aren't pretty," decided Helen, patting the ugly pile.

Mr. Anderson strolled toward them again after giving various directions to his men.

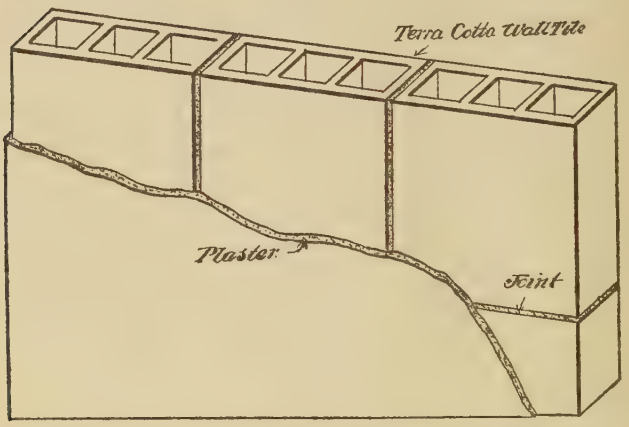
"Just how is this tile used?" inquired Dorothy, as he seemed to be more at leisure now.

"We build a wall of this hollow tile," he answered; "then we put the plaster right on to it. Do you see that the outside is rather rough? That is so the plaster will have something to take hold of.

We mix it up of cement and lime and sand and put on three coats. The first one is mixed with hair, and mashed on hard so that it will stick and it is roughened so that the next coat will stick to it."

"Is the next coat made of the same stuff?"

"Without the hair; and the third coat is as thin



The Walls of Sweetbrier Lodge — Plaster on Hollow Tile

as cream and is flowed on to make a smooth-looking outside finish."

"That's a lot of work," commented Dorothy.

"That's not all we're going to do to your walls; Mrs. Smith wants them to be a trifle yellowish in tone — a little warmer than the natural color of the plaster — so we're going to wash on some mineral matter that will give them color and waterproof them at the same time."

"Killing two birds," murmured Helen.

"Then the whole house will look plastery except the roof and chimneys," said Ethel Brown.

"Including the roof and chimneys," returned Mr. Anderson. "We're going to use concrete shingles —"

"Concrete shingles! Doesn't that sound funny!"

"They are colored, so they look like green or red shingles."

"What color is Mother going to have?"

"Dark green. The chimney is to be made of reinforced concrete."

"'Reinforced' must mean 'strengthened,' but how do you strengthen it?" inquired Margaret.

"You've seen how we build a mold to pour the concrete in; inside of the mold we build a sort of cage of steel rods. Don't you see that when the concrete hardens it would be almost impossible for such a reinforced piece of work to break through?"

"Couldn't an earthquake break it?"

"An earthquake might give a piece of solid concrete such a twist that it would crack through, but suppose the crack found itself up against a steel rod? Don't you think it would complicate matters?"

The girls thought it would.

"I'm awfully glad our chimney is going to be reinforced," Dorothy exclaimed, "because up on this knoll we're going to feel the wind a lot and it would be horrid if the chimney should fall down!"

"It certainly would," agreed the Ethels, but Mr. Anderson assured them that they need not be afraid

of any accident of the sort with a reinforced concrete chimney.

"I've seen skyscrapers going up in New York," said Margaret "and all the beams were of steel. Are you going to use steel beams here?"

"No, we don't often use steel construction for small houses, but this house is going to be more fireproof than most small houses even if it does have wooden beams. You watch it as it goes on and notice all the points that make for fireproofness. It will interest you," Mr. Anderson promised as he walked away.

The girls all washed their hands as well as they could with the hose with which the workmen watered the concrete mixture, but they had nothing to dry them on and they walked down the road holding them before them and waving them in the breeze.

"Mother will think we are crazy if she happens to be looking out of the window," said Dorothy.

"My aunt sent you a message, Dorothy," said Margaret.

"What aunt? I didn't know you had an aunt," replied Dorothy.

"She seems like a new aunt to us; James and I haven't seen her since we were little bits of things."

"Where does she live?" asked Ethel Blue.

"In Washington. She's an interior decorator and she's awfully busy, so when she has had to come on to New York to buy materials or to see people she has never had a chance to stay with us."

" Is she going to make a visit this time? " inquired Ethel Brown.

" She has come for a long visit now. She has a commission to decorate a house in Englewood. It's going to take her several weeks, and then she wants to rest and do some studying and to make the rounds of the decorators in the city, so it will be several months before she goes back again."

" That's nice," said Ethel Blue politely, and she was glad she had thought so because Margaret said at once, " We think it's splendid. She's a young aunt, lots and lots younger than Mother, and James and I think she's loads of fun."

" What was her message to me? " asked Dorothy.

" O, we were telling her about the United Service Club and the things we did — sending gifts to the war orphans and celebrating holidays and our plans for helping some poor women and children in the summer and for taking care of the Belgian baby. She was awfully interested and said she felt as if she knew all of you people and the Watkinses quite well, we talked about you so much. Then we told her about Dorothy's house, and how Mrs. Smith had said we might all give our opinions about the decorating, and she asked us to tell you that she'd be very glad indeed to act as consulting decorator when you come to the inside work."

" Why, that's awfully sweet of her! " exclaimed Dorothy. " Mother isn't going to have a regular decorator, and I know she'll be immensely pleased to have Miss — what is your aunt's name? "

" Graham; she's our Aunt Daisy! "

"— to have Miss Graham give us advice and ' check up ' on our suggestions."

" By the time your house is ready for that part she will have finished her Englewood house; but she said she'd be glad to come over and see the house and the plans any time when she was free for the afternoon, and she hoped you'd consult her about everything you wanted to."

" Daisy is a pretty name, isn't it? " Ethel Blue murmured to herself. " I wish one of us was named Daisy."

" Her name is really Margaret; I'm named after her. Daisy is the nickname for Margaret, you know."

" It's a lovely name," said Ethel Blue again.

" And please tell Miss Daisy that I think she's the finest ever, and Mother will think so, too, when I tell her about this," added Dorothy.

" And do ask her to come over to one of the U. S. C. meetings when we happen to be doing something that will interest her," concluded Helen, who was the president of the club.

CHAPTER III

THE CLUB SELECTS THE BENCHES

IT seemed to Dorothy and the Ethels that the outside of Sweetbrier Lodge, as Mrs. Smith had determined to call her house, went up with remarkable speed, but that the inside would never be done — never! Every day the girls walked down the road after school, and stood and surveyed the general appearance from the sidewalk and from across the street and sometimes they went on to Mrs. Emerson's and discussed vigorously as to whether the view of the corner of the house that was to be seen now would still be seen after the leaves came out or whether the house would be entirely concealed by the foliage.

"That's 'one of the things no feller knows,'" Mr. Emerson quoted. "We shall have to wait and see."

"We can get an idea how it is to look from the road," said Ethel Brown.

"Only there'll be a lot of planting," Dorothy explained. "There'll be a hedge along the street and a lot of shrubs on the knoll and the house will be covered with vines in the course of time."

"That's another good point about concrete," declared Mr. Emerson; "vines don't injure it as they do brick."

"We'll have it entirely covered, then," laughed Dorothy.

"I thought it was to be a bungalow," said Mrs. Emerson. "Your mother has always spoken of it as a bungalow, but the plans I saw the men following the other day when I went up the hill to take a look at things, seemed to me like a two story house."

"Mother changed her mind," said Dorothy. "She thought a bungalow would be too crowded now that we have little Belgian Elisabeth with us, so the house is going to have two stories and an attic."

"The U. S. C. couldn't get on without Dorothy's attic," smiled Ethel Brown, for almost all of the presents for the Christmas Ship had been made in the attic of Dorothy's present abiding place, and the Club had had many meetings there.

"There's nothing like having a well-thought-out plan before you attempt building," said Mr. Emerson, "and that your mother had."

"She tried to think of every possible need, Ayleesabet's as well as our own," continued Dorothy, using the pronunciation that the Belgian baby had given her own name.

"She has a good contractor in Anderson."

"He didn't make the very lowest bid," said Dorothy. "There was one man who was lower, but he was such a lot lower that Mother thought there must be something the matter with the quality of the material he used, or that he employed workmen so poor that they might not do their work well, so she didn't consider that offer at all."

"She was very wise," commended Mr. Emerson. "He might have spoiled the whole thing and have cost her more money in the end by turning out a poor job."

While the building was going on and before the inside work was done the girls spent a good deal of time in planning for the furnishing of the garden. The flower and vegetable beds had all been arranged some weeks before and many of them had been planted, but the artistic part of the garden had been left until there should be time to devote to it. Mrs. Smith had promised Dorothy that she should have the choice of the garden furniture, reserving for herself a veto power if her daughter chose anything that seemed to her entirely unsuitable.

"Not that I expect to use it," she said, smiling at the girls who were listening to her.

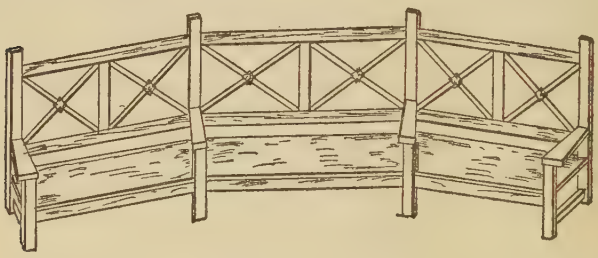
The selection of the benches and tables and trellises was made a subject of attention by the whole United Service Club. A meeting was called in the partly begun garden so that they might have the "lie of the land" before them as they talked. Dorothy took with her a number of catalogues from which to select or to gather ideas.

"We've got a good shelter of large trees already provided for us," she said as they all seated themselves in such shade as the young leaves made.

"There ought to be a fine large settee under it where we can have Club meetings all summer, no matter how warm it is," urged Tom Watkins with wise foresight. Tom and his sister, Della, came out

from New York for the club gatherings, and the prospect of meeting out of doors instead of in the attic, which was delightful in winter but not so attractive in warm weather, made him offer this shrewd suggestion.

"In the first place," said Dorothy again, opening the various catalogues and spreading them on the grass where they could all see them, "don't you



"A fine large settee"

think it would be pretty to have all the chairs and benches of one pattern? Or don't you?"

"I think it would," answered Ethel Brown, examining the pages carefully before she made her decision.

"Would what?"

"I should like them all alike. It would be messy to have a lot of different patterns."

Ethel Blue, who had a good deal of artistic sense and ability, nodded her agreement with this belief. They all came to the same conclusion.

"Then, let's pick out the pattern," said Dorothy, who had an orderly mind.

"Something plain, so the visitor's eye won't be drawn to the benches instead of the flowers," recommended Helen. "Suppose we were sitting here, for instance, and looking toward the flower beds — there will be some tables and chairs between us and the flowers, probably —"

"If the seeds will only grow," Dorothy sighed comically.

"— and we want to forget them and not have them intrude on our attention."

"Correct!" James Hancock thumped the ground by way of applause.

"What's the plainest pattern there is?" asked Della, extending her hand for a book.

"That one — but that's too plain," remonstrated Ethel Blue. "That's so plain that it draws your attention as much as if it were all fussed up."

They laughed at her disgust and urged her to choose the next plainest.

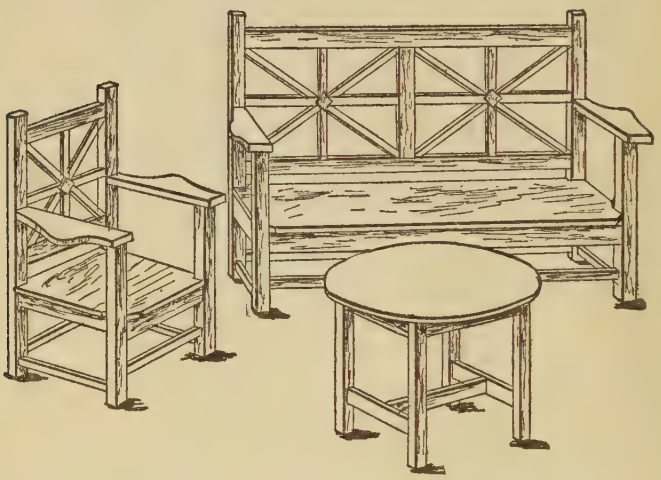
"I rather think this one with cross bars is pretty," she decided seriously. "You wouldn't get tired of that — especially if they're all painted dark green so you won't see them much."

"You girls seem to want to have invisible furniture," grinned Roger. "Me for something more substantial."

"These will be substantial enough — they're made of cypress," retorted Helen, "but you don't want to see a lot of chairs and benches when you come out to observe the beauties of nature, my child."

"I can bay the moon on a white bench with an elaborate pattern just as musically as on a plain, dark green one," insisted Roger.

"Don't pay any attention to him," urged Ethel Brown, which crushing remark from a younger sister



"Benches and chairs and small tables for lemonade and cocoa"

was rewarded by a hair-pull effectively delivered by Roger.

"Yow!" squealed Ethel.

"Now who's baying the moon?" inquired her brother.

"Let's decide on the cross-barred kind," decreed Dorothy.

"The Lady of the Garden has made her decision," announced James, tooting through his hands as if he

were a herald making an announcement. "Now for the shapes. How many are you going to have, Lady?"

"I think there ought to be a very large bench that would hold almost all the Club, and then one or two smaller benches and two or three chairs and two small tables for lemonade and cocoa."

"And to hold the Secretary's book when she's writing," urged Ethel Blue who held the office of scribe and had not always found herself conveniently situated to do her work.

"Here's a bully bench for the whole U. S. C.," cried Tom. "It's curved so it will fit right under this semi-circle of trees as if it were made for this very spot."

He held up the picture of a wide bench with two wings. It was greeted with applause.

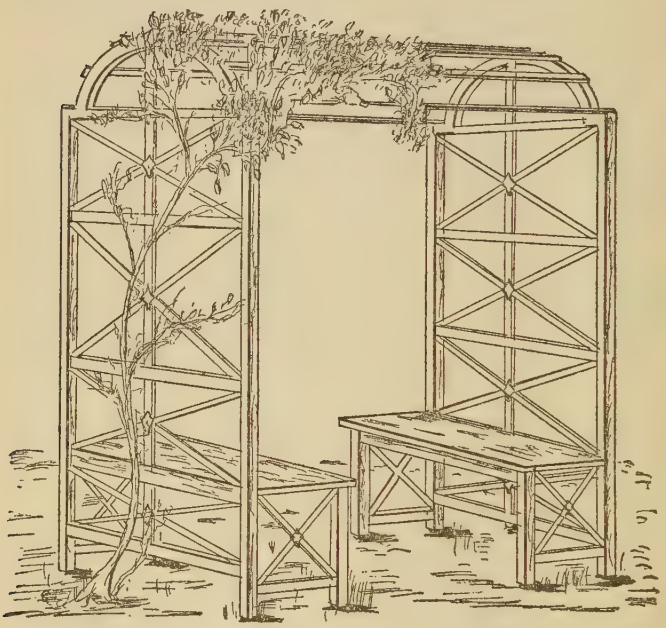
"When that is made in the pattern we chose it will be as pretty as any one could ask for," Dorothy decided.

"And painted green," added Ethel Blue, at which they all laughed. "I'm serious about the green," she insisted. "Don't you see what I mean, Dorothy?" she continued, appealing to the person who was to have the final decision on the question.

"I think you're right," replied Dorothy. "Don't mind what they say. Write down one of those, Miss Secretary, and one of these right-angled ones — don't you all of you think that's a comfy one?"

They did, and they also approved of the single bench and the chairs and the small tables.

"They won't be all jammed up in this corner, of course," Dorothy explained gravely, "but when we have a Club meeting we can bring them together if we want to and room enough for everybody."



"Here's an arbor that you can walk through"

"I thought we were all to sit on the big bench," objected Tom with an air of deep disappointment.

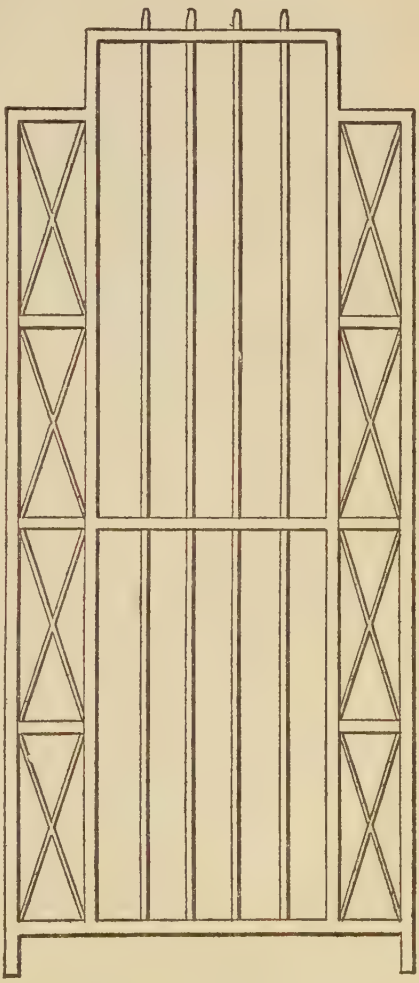
"So we shall if you boys are too lazy to pull the other benches and chairs over here," answered Dorothy. "If we have plenty we can arrange them any way we want to."

"What about trellises?" inquired Ethel Blue who had been continuing her researches in the catalogues. "Here are some beauties. Don't you think you'll need some?"

"She certainly will if that Dorothy Perkins rambler rose gets busy as it ought to," decided Roger.

"There'll be a lot of vines and tall things if they'll only grow," said Dorothy hopefully. "I think there ought to be one or two flat ones and an arbor that will be a trellis."

"Here's an arbor that you can walk through or sit down in while you admire your



A Trellis for the Rambler Rose

plants, and you will be protected from the sun," Tom pointed out.

"And that same one with a lattice back and a bench inside makes a pretty good imitation of a summer house," suggested Ethel Brown.

"We'll have one apiece of those, then."

"Count up and see how much stuff you're planning to order," Roger suggested. "You've got a huge big place to set them in here but you don't want too much wood work, nevertheless."

They came to the conclusion that there were not too many for the size of the grounds and were well satisfied with their choice.

"Do you see how well we're going to see the house from here?" Dorothy asked.

They all agreed that it would be very pretty from that point.

"My idea is that the garden must look well from the house," said Dorothy. "Mother wants a pergola somewhere. Don't you think the right place for it would be covering a walk leading from the house to here?"

"That's a great notion," approved Tom. "As you came toward the garden you'd have a — what do you call the effect — where you see a view framed in somehow?"

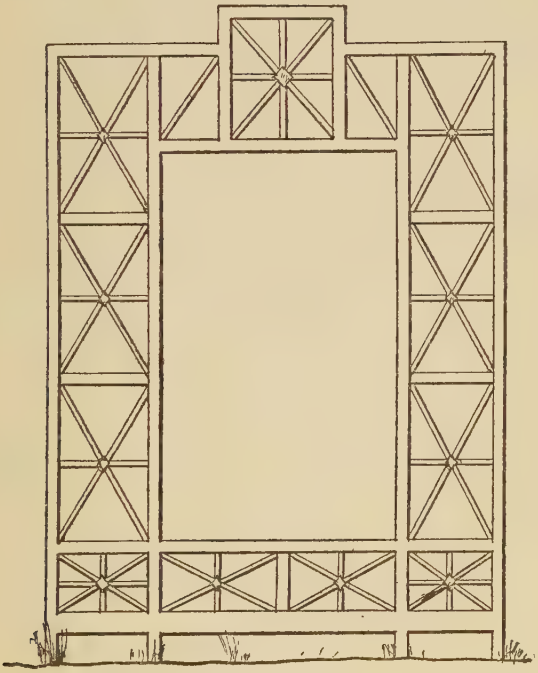
"Do you mean a vista?" asked Margaret.

"That's it. There would be a vista of the garden."

"It will be lovely!" Helen said decisively. "And I don't see why there shouldn't be a trellis

framing a view of the woods toward Grandfather Emerson's; that would be pretty, too."

Dorothy went over to look at the drawing that



A Trellis Framing a View of the Woods

Helen held up to her and decided straightway that it was worth trying. They all went toward the upper side of the garden where young peach trees were planted on the northern slope of the ridge and chose a spot which gave a charming picture of the adjoin-

ing field with its brook and the woods beyond.

"The birds are coming along pretty well now," announced James who had been lying on his back gazing up into the branches swaying in the upper breeze.

"Are you going to build any bird houses, Dorothy?" asked Ethel Brown.

"I suppose we'll have to if we want them to stay late in the season or all winter," replied her cousin. "But bird houses are so ugly."

"Not the modern ones," interposed James eagerly. "You make them out of pieces of the trunks of trees with the bark on, and you fix up a platform with a stick on it that has spikes to hang suet on and they aren't a bit conspicuous and lots of birds will stay all winter that otherwise would go south before the regular Palm Beach rush."

"We must have some then," Dorothy made up her mind. "Say 'Robert of Lincoln'?" she begged Ethel Brown, who was the Club's reciter, "and then we'll go home and have some cocoa and cookies."

"Do, Ethel Brown;" "Come on," were the cries from all the U. S. C. members as they settled themselves to listen to Bryant's charming verses.

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain side and mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name,
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,

Hidden among the summer flowers,
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily dressed,
Wearing a bright black wedding coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his cheery note:
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Linclon's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she,
One weak chirp is her only note,
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can.
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!

There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seed for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air,
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes, the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;

When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTOPHER FINDS A NEW LODGING

THERE was trouble in chicken circles. The young chicks that the Ethels and Dorothy had helped Dicky move from the incubator to the brooder were making rapid progress toward broiler size, and had been transferred to a run of their own where they scratched and dozed happily through the long spring days. Dicky and Ayleesabet, the Belgian baby, were examining them on a late June afternoon. Dicky had brought with him his old friend, the turtle, which had not yet been moved to Dorothy's pool, since his present owner wanted to wait until his aunt's house was occupied before he let so cherished a possession go where he might slip away and his loss, perhaps, be unnoticed.

" When you're living right there tho you can watch Chrithtopher Columbuth all the time I'll let you have him," Dicky had promised Dorothy.

" I see myself in my mind's eye sitting side of the tank all day and night holding the turtle's paw! " Dorothy exclaimed when she told the Ethels of Dicky's decision.

Perhaps because he felt that he was soon to be parted from his old comrade Dicky's affection for Christopher seemed to increase and he developed a habit of carrying him about, sometimes in his hand

and sometimes in a little basket which Dorothy had made for Christopher's Christmas gift. To-day he had brought him to the chicken yard in his hand and had laid him down on the ground while he examined his flock and called Ayleesabet's attention to the beauties of this or the other miniature hen.

Elisabeth's words were few, but she managed to make her wants and opinions known with surprising ease, and she never had the least trouble about expressing her emotions. Her little playmate had learned this and therefore when he heard loud howls behind his back he knew that it was not anger that was disturbing the usually placid baby, but terror. Shriek after shriek arose although it seemed to him that he turned about almost instantly.

He was not in time, however, to prevent her from being thrown down in some mysterious way, or to see the cause of the commotion among the chickens. They fluttered and squawked and ran to and fro, tumbling over each other and running with perfect indifference over the baby as she lay yelling on the ground. Her blue romper legs came up every now and then out of the mass of chicken feathers, and their kicking only added to the disturbance and confusion of the chicks.

The hubbub did not go unnoticed. Roger ran from his vegetable garden to see what was the matter; Helen appeared from her garden of wild flowers; Miss Merriam, the baby's caretaker, ran from the porch where she was talking with the Ethels who were waiting for the out-of-town members of

the U. S. C. to arrive. At the moment when all these people were rushing to the rescue, Margaret and James Hancock, just off the Glen Point street car, hurried from the corner, and Della and Tom Watkins, arrived by the latest train from New York, burst open the gate in their excitement.

To meet all these inquiries came Dicky, tugging after him by the leg, the baby, howling pitifully by this time as she was dragged over the grass. Miss Merriam seized her and hugged her tight.

"What's the matter with the little darling precious?" she crooned.

Ayleesabet gathered herself together courageously and her sobbing died away.

"What was it all about?" Miss Merriam inquired of Dicky.

"I don't know," replied Dicky, his own lip trembling as he tried to understand the rapid, thrilling experience.

"Tell Gertrude what happened," Miss Merriam urged the baby, wiping away her tears and setting her down on her feet on the grass just as Christopher Columbus bumped his way over the sod to join them.

Ayleesabet's conversational powers were not equal to the explanation, but her little hands could tell a great deal, and her caretaker was skilled in interpreting them. She pointed to the turtle and called him by the nickname that Dicky had given him, "Chriththy"; then she spread out her fat little fingers and waved a forward motion with her hand.

"Chrissy stuck out his head and legs and walked

ahead," interpreted Miss Merriam. "Where was he, Dicky?"

"In the chicken yard."

Elisabeth was kneeling beside the turtle now, tapping his shell with a chubby forefinger; after which she rolled over on her back and screamed.

Miss Merriam shook her head at this demonstration, but Dicky translated it out of his previous experience.

"The chickenth hit hith thhell with their beakth, and, when he moved they were frightened and knocked her over," he guessed.

"That's just what happened, I believe," said Roger, setting Elisabeth on her feet once more. "I've seen the chickens run like anything from Christopher, and probably they ran between the baby's legs and upset her and then scampered all over her. I don't wonder she was scared."

Christopher gave no testimony in the case. He may have been overcome by the confusion; at any rate he withdrew into his shell and preserved a studied calm from which he could not be roused.

"I think you can have him," said Dicky suddenly to Dorothy, who had come through the fence at the corner where her yard joined her cousins. "He botherth me."

"Very well," said Dorothy. "Let's take him over to Sweetbrier Lodge this afternoon. We're all going over there anyway — bring him along, Dicky."

So the procession set forth, Dicky and his shell-covered friend at the fore, escorted by all the rest

of the United Service Club, while Miss Merriam and her charge, whose walking ability had not yet developed much speed, brought up the rear.

As they all toiled up the hill to Sweetbrier Lodge Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Morton came out on the veranda of the new house to watch them.

"Has anything happened?" called Mrs. Smith as soon as they were within earshot.

"We're just bringing Christopher over to his new home," Dorothy explained to her mother.

> "'The time of the singing of birds is come,
> And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land,'"

quoted Mrs. Morton. "I used to think that that meant a turtle like Dicky's and not a turtle-dove," and the two mothers laughed and disappeared within the house while the younger people kept on to the garden and the concrete pool.

When they reached there Dicky gazed at the pool in dismay.

"There ithn't any water in it," he objected, shaking his head doubtfully.

"We can reach it with the hose and fill it up in no time," his cousin explained.

"It'll run out of the hole," pointing to the hole made by the broomstick when the concrete was soft.

"We'll put a plug in the hole."

"He hasn't any log to sit on."

"Roger will find him a stick."

"I don't want to leave him here all alone,"

screamed Dicky, overcome by a renewal of his former misgivings. Casting himself on the ground he hugged his treasure to his breast and waved his legs in the air.

"You can take him back again if you want to," Ethel Brown reminded him, "but you know he's always getting into trouble with the chickens now. He seems to run away every day."

As the memory of the latest encounter between Christopher and the chicks with Elisabeth's overthrow, flashed before him, Dicky howled again. There seemed to be no haven on earth for his favorite.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," suggested Dorothy soothingly. "Let's go down to the house. The laundry is finished, and we can put him in one of the tubs there until this pool is fixed to suit you."

"It'th dark in the laundry," objected Dicky again.

"Not in this laundry. You see," explained Dorothy, sitting down beside the sufferer and patting him gently, "the house is built on the side of a hill, so the laundry has full sized windows and is bright and cheerful though it's on a level with the cellar. I think Christopher will like it."

Dicky stood up, his face smeared with tears, but a new interest gleaming in his reddened eyes.

"Come on," urged Ethel Blue, tactfully; "let's all go and see if we can't make him comfortable."

"I'll pick up a piece of log for him as we go

along," promised Roger, and he and Tom and James went off towards the woods to look for just the right thing.

"What a perfectly dandy cellar. Why, it's as bright as the upper part of the house!" exclaimed Margaret as the procession invaded the lower regions of the Lodge.

"Isn't it fine!" agreed Dorothy. "The workmen have cleared it all up, and, if this part were all, it might be lived in right off."

"The whitewashed walls make it look bright."

"And the large windows! I never saw such windows in a cellar."

"Mother says I may put little cheesecloth curtains in them."

"Curtains will look sweet the day after you take in the winter supply of coal," grinned Roger, who appeared with the other boys, carrying Christopher's bit of log.

"They won't look dirty, if that's what you mean by 'sweet,'" Dorothy retorted. "Look —" and she opened the door of a coal bin —"the coal is put in through a concrete chute that leads directly into the bin and the bin is entirely shut off from the cellar. No dust floats out of that, young man."

"How do you get the coal out?"

"Here's a little door that slides up and catches. You notice that the floor of the bin isn't level with the cellar floor; it's raised to make it a comfortable height for shoveling. Under it is the place for the logs for the open fires. There are two bins, one for

furnace coal and the other for the coal for the stoves, and the kindling wood goes in this third one. They are all together and large enough but not too large, and the furnace coal is near the boiler and the small coal is near the laundry and the wood is close to the dumb waiter that will take that and the clean clothes upstairs."

"All as compact as a cut-out puzzle," approved Roger. "I take off my hat to this arrangement."

"Thank you," courtesied Dorothy. "Mother and I worked that out together, and we're rather pleased with it ourselves."

"What do you do with the ashes?" asked Roger, who took care of several furnaces in the winter time, and therefore made his examination as a specialist.

"Put them down that chute with a swinging door and into a covered can. It will be hard for the ashes to fly there."

"This is the concrete floor we superintended," said Helen, looking at it closely.

"All smooth and well drained with rounded edges. It's going to be as clean as a whistle down here. See the metal ceiling? That's for fire prevention, and so is the sprinkler system and there's a metal covered door at the head of the cellar stairs."

"There seems to be a lot of machinery for a small house," observed James as he carried his examination around the space.

"Mother said she couldn't afford luxuries but she could afford comforts and these are some of the comforts," smiled Dorothy.

"Not very pretty comforts," remarked Ethel Blue dryly.

"'Handsome is as handsome does,'" quoted her cousin. "When these things get to working you won't care whether they're beautiful to look at or not."

"What's the heating system — steam or hot water?" asked Tom, standing before the boiler.

"Hot water. They say it's more convenient for a small house because you don't have to keep up such a big fire all the time."

"That's so; in steam heating there has to be fire enough to make steam, anyway, doesn't there?"

"And when the steam in the pipes cools it turns to water and dribbles away, but in the hot water system there will be some heat in the outside of your radiator as long as the water inside has any warmth at all."

"How does the expense compare?" inquired James who was always interested in the financial side of all questions.

"The hot water system is said to be cheaper," replied Dorothy.

"Why are there so many pipes?" asked Ethel Brown, looking with a puzzled air at the collection before her.

"Hear me lecture on heating!" laughed Dorothy; "but I did study it all out with Mother, so I think I'm telling you the truth about it. There have to be two sets of pipes, one to take the hot water to the radi-

ators and the other to bring it back after it has cooled."

"There seem to be big pipes and small ones."

"Mains and branch pipes they call them. The man who put these in said this house was especially well arranged for piping because it wouldn't take any more pressure to force the water into one radiator than another. He says there's going to be a good even heat all over everywhere."

"There isn't a lot of difference between radiators for steam and those for hot water, is there?" asked Ethel Blue.

"No, you have to put something with water in it on top of both kinds to make the air of the room moist. Here you have to open the air valve yourself and let out the air that accumulates in the radiator. In the steam ones they are automatically worked by steam."

"There can't be much air in the hot water radiator, I should think," said Margaret thoughtfully.

"There isn't. You only have to open the valve two or three times in the course of the winter. The biggest difference is that the hot water system has to have an expansion tank."

"What's that?"

"Why, when steam is shut up it just presses harder than ever, but when water is heated it swells and it's likely to burst open whatever it's in, so there has to be an open tank up at the top of the house where it can go and swell around all it wants to," laughed Dorothy.

"What are these affairs?" inquired Margaret who had been looking at two other arrangements near by.

"That one is a gas thing for heating water in summer when there isn't any other fire. There's a tiny flame burning all the time, and when the water is drawn out of the tank the flame becomes larger automatically and heats up a new supply."

"That's a fine scheme; you don't have to heat the house up and yet the water is always ready. What's the other?"

"That's to burn up the garbage. In the kitchen there's a tiny closet for the garbage pail. It's ventilated from the outside. There is a thing that burns the garbage and makes it heat the water, but Mother decided that we had so small a family that there might be days when there wouldn't be fuel enough to make a decent fire, so we'd better have the gas heater."

"The other would be economical for a hotel," observed prudent James.

"Here's the refrigerating plant," Dorothy said, motioning toward a tank and a set of pipes and a small motor.

"Going to cut out the iceman?" grinned Tom.

"We're going to be independent of him. Mother doesn't like natural ice, any way; she went over to the Rosemont pond last winter when the men were cutting and the ice was so dirty she made up her mind right off that she didn't want any more of it. This thing will chill the refrigerator up in the kitchen and

pipes from it are going under the flooring of the drawing room and the dining room so they can be made comfy in summer."

"Hope you can cut them off in winter!" and Roger gave a tremendous shiver.

"We can," Dorothy reassured him.

"Good work!"

"It makes small cakes of ice too, so we can always have plenty for the Club lemonades."

"I don't know but I think that's more useful than the heating arrangements," approved plump little Della.

"That's because you're fat," responded Tom with brotherly frankness. "You think you suffer most in summer, but if you didn't have any heat in winter you'd change your cry."

"I suppose I should, but I do nearly *melt* in warm weather," sighed Della.

"We don't mean to if we can help it," laughed Dorothy. "This is the air-washing arrangement over here," went on Dorothy, as she continued her round of the cellar.

"Air-washing!" was the general chorus.

"As long as we have a little motor we're going to make it useful. There's a small fan here that brings in the fresh air. It goes into a 'spray chamber' and is washed free of dust with water that is cold in summer and warm in winter."

"I see clearly that the temperature of this castle is going to be just right," exclaimed Roger.

"After the air leaves the spray chamber it goes

over some plates that take all the moisture out of it, and then the fan forces it through the pipes that go into every room."

"Are those the little gratings I noticed in all the rooms the other day?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Those are the ventilators. Don't you think we've made everything very compact here? All these pipes take up very little room."

"Mighty little!" commended Roger. "And they're all open so you can get at them without any trouble."

"Here's a scheme Patrick suggested," laughed Dorothy, pointing upward to what looked like a concrete shelf with an upturned border almost at the top of the cellar wall.

"What's it for?" asked Ethel Brown.

"That shelf is directly underneath the seat beside the fireplace in the drawing room. Patrick plans to save himself the trouble of carrying up the logs by piling them on this shelf down here. Then he lifts the cover of the seat upstairs and all he has to do is to take out his wood and make his fire!"

"That certainly is a cracker-jack labor saving device! Good for Patrick!"

"He's especially tickled with the vacuum cleaner run by this same little motor. You ought to hear him talk about it."

"What are these cupboards for?" asked Helen who had been exploring.

"That one with the glass doors is for preserves, and the place in the other corner that has a fence for

its two inside walls is a place for cleaning silver and shoes and lamps and brasses. See — there are cupboards along the inside of the fence. They hold all the cleaning materials, and the cleaner can sit in a swing chair in the middle and use a different part of the concrete shelf against the two cellar walls for boots or fire-irons or knives and forks or lamps. At one end is a sink so he can have what water he needs for his work and he can wash his hands when he turns from one kind of cleaning to another."

"And he isn't all smothered up in a small room. Who thought of that?"

"Patrick and I worked that out together. Patrick has lots of ingenuity."

"I should say you had, too!" exclaimed Della, admiringly.

"Here's where Dorothy does her carpentering," cried James.

"I may move that bench up in the attic later," explained Dorothy, "but I thought I'd leave it here until the house was done, because there are apt to be little things to be hammered and nailed for some time, I suppose."

"How long are you going to be before you fikth a plathe for Chrithopher Columbuth?" demanded Dicky, whose patience was entirely exhausted.

"We'll make him happy right here and now," answered Dorothy briskly, throwing open the door of the laundry.

The sun shone gayly on the concrete floor and the room was a cheerful spot. An electric washing ma-

chine stood ready although covered tubs were built against the wall for use in emergencies, and at one side was a drying closet. There were numerous plugs against the wall for the attachment of pressing irons.

"What's this?" asked Ethel Brown, lifting a cover of a hopper at the base of a chute.

"That's the chute for soiled clothes. The other end is on the bedroom floor, and it saves carrying."

"That's as good as Patrick's log device!" smiled Helen.

"Shall I put Christopher's log in here?" asked Roger, lifting the top of one of the stationary tubs.

"Yes, fix it so he can crawl up and sit in the sunshine where it strikes the tub. We'll have to draw some water from the hydrant outside; the water isn't turned on in the house yet."

Roger picked up a pail that was standing near by and went up the cellar stairs two at a time.

"Now, sir," he said to Dicky when he came back, "I'll lift you up and you can put Christopher into his new abode."

Dicky deposited his charge gently on the log and he lay there poking out his head to enjoy the sunshine.

"Did you bring some bits of meat for him?" Roger asked.

For answer Dicky turned out of the pocket of his rompers a handful of chopped beef.

"Certainly unappetizing in appearance," said Tom, wrinkling his nose, "but I dare say Christopher is not particular."

CHAPTER V

THE LAW OF LAUGHTER

THE Mortons were sitting on their porch on a warm evening waving fans and trying to think that the coming night promised comfortable sleep. The Ethels sat on the upper step, Roger was stretched on the floor at one side, Helen sat beside her mother's hammock which she kept in gentle motion by an occasional movement of her hand, and Dicky was dozing in a large chair. In a near-by tree an insect insisted that "Katy did," and in the grass a cricket chirruped its shrill call.

"I do feel that Aunt Louise's being able to build this pretty house after all her years of wandering is about the nicest thing that ever happened out of a fairy story," murmured Helen softly to her mother, but loudly enough for the others to hear.

"There are people who talk about the law of compensation," smiled Mrs. Morton in the darkness. "They think that if one good is lacking in our lives other goods take its place."

"Do you believe that?"

"I believe that everything that happens to us comes because we have obeyed or disobeyed God's laws. Sometimes we are quite unconscious of dis-

obeying them, but the law has to work out just as if we knew all about it."

"For instance?" came a deep voice from the floor, indicating that Roger had awakened.

"Do you remember the time you walked off the end of the porch one day?"

"I should say I did! My nose aches at the mere thought of it."

"You didn't know anything about the law of gravitation, but the law worked in your case just as if you had known all about it."

"I'm bound to state that it did," confirmed Roger, still gently rubbing his nose as he lay in the shadow.

"It seems as if it might have held up for a little boy who didn't know what he was going to get by disobeying it," said Ethel Blue sympathetically.

"But it didn't and it never does," returned Mrs. Morton. "That's one reason why we ought to try to learn what God's laws are just as fast and as thoroughly as we can; not only the laws of nature like the law of gravitation, but laws of morality and justice and right thinking and unselfishness and kindness toward others."

"Sometimes mighty mean people seem to prosper," said Ethel Brown, with a hint of rebellion in her voice.

"That's because those people obey to the letter the law that controls prosperity of a material kind. A man may be cruel to his wife and unkind to his children, but he may have a genius for making

money. Some people call it the law of compensation. I call it merely an understanding of the financial law and a lack of understanding of the law of kindness."

"I don't see what law dear Aunt Louise could have broken to have made her have such a hard time," wondered Ethel Blue. "Her husband being killed and her having to wander about without a home for so many years — that seems like a hard punishment."

"Men have decided that 'ignorance of the law is no excuse'!" said her aunt, "and the same thing is true of laws that are not man-made."

"That seems awfully hard," objected Helen; "it doesn't seem fair to punish a person for what he doesn't know."

"If a cannibal should come to Rosemont and should kill some one and have a barbecue, we should think that he ought to be deprived of his liberty because he was a dangerous person to have about, even if we felt sure that he did not know that he was doing an act forbidden by New Jersey law. The position is that although a person may be ignorant of the law it is his business to know it. That seems to be the way with the higher laws; we may break them in our ignorance — but we ought not to be ignorant. We ought to try just as hard as we know how all the time to do everything as well as we can and to be as good as we can. If we never let ourselves do a mean act or think a mean thought we're bound to come to an understand-

ing of the great laws sooner than if we just jog along not thinking anything about them. I believe one reason why your Aunt Louise was so slow in reaching the end of her troubles after Uncle Leonard died was because she was unable to control her sorrow. She has told me that she was completely crushed by his death and the condition of poverty in which she found herself with a little child — Dorothy — to take care of."

"I don't blame her," murmured Ethel Blue.

"She blames herself, because she has learned that giving way to grief paralyzes all the powers that God has given us to carry on the work of life with. If our minds are filled with gloom our bodies don't behave as they ought to — I dare say even you children know that."

"I know," agreed Ethel Blue, who was sensitive and imaginative and suffered unnecessarily over many things.

"Your mind doesn't go, either," Roger added. "I know when I got in the dumps last spring about graduating I couldn't do a thing. My work went worse than ever. It was only when Mr. Wheeler" — referring to the principal of the high school — "jollied me up and told me I was getting on as well as the rest of the fellows that I took a brace; and you know I did come out all right."

"I should say you did, dear," acknowledged his mother proudly. "Instances like that make you understand how necessary it is to be brave and to be filled with joy because life is going on as well

as it is. It is our duty to make the most of everything that is given us — our bodies, our minds, our spirits — and if courage will help or joy will help then we must cultivate courage and joy."

"Did Aunt Louise see that after a while?"

"Not for a long time, she says. After the shock of Uncle Leonard's sudden death had worn away somewhat she began naturally to have a little more courage — not to be so completely crushed as she was at first. Then she saw that when she was feeling brave she could accomplish more, and succeed better in new undertakings. If she went to ask for work somewhere and had no hope that she would receive it she usually did not receive it; but if she went feeling that this day was to be one of success for her it usually was."

"I suppose she went in with a sort 'Of course you'll give it to me' air that made the men she was asking think of 'of course' they would," smiled Roger.

"I don't doubt it. Then she says that she found out that there was real value in laughter."

"In laughter!" repeated Ethel Brown. "Why laughter is just foolishness."

"No, indeed; laughter is the outward expression of delight."

"Lord Chesterfield told his son he hoped he'd never hear him laugh in all his life," offered Roger.

"Lord Chesterfield hated noisy laughter as much as I do. There's nothing more annoying than empty, silly giggling and laughter; but the laughter

that means real delight over something worth being delighted at — that's quite another matter. Lord Chesterfield and I are agreed in being opposed to a vulgar *manner* of laughing, but we are also agreed in believing that delight needs expression. Isn't it in that same letter that he says he hopes he will often see his son smile?"

"Same place," responded Roger briefly.

"Aunt Louise says she found that even if she wasn't feeling really gay she could raise her spirits by doing her best to laugh at something. If you hunt hard enough there is almost always something funny enough to laugh at within reach of you."

"Like Dicky here snoozing away as soundly as if he were in bed."

"Poor little man. You needn't carry him up yet, though. He's not uncomfortable there."

"There's one thing I think is perfectly wonderful about Aunt Louise," said Ethel Blue; "she takes so much pleasure out of little things. She's interested in everything the U. S. C. does, and she wants to help on anything the town undertakes — you know how nice she was about the school gardens — and sometimes when a day comes that seems just stupid with nothing to do at all, if you go over to Aunt Louise's she'll tell you something she's seen or heard that day that you never would have noticed for yourself and that really is interesting."

"She gets their full value out of everything that passes before her eyes. It's the wisest thing to do.

The big things of life are more absorbing but very few of us encounter the big things of life. Most of us meet the small matters, the everyday happenings, and nothing else."

"Isn't life full of a mess of 'em!" ejaculated Roger. "Getting up and dressing and brushing your hair and eating three meals a day have to be done three hundred sixty-five times a year; whereas you hear some splendid music or come across a fine new poem or find yourself in a position where you can do a real kindness about once in a cat's age. Queer, isn't it?"

"That's just why it's a good plan to see the opportunities in the little things. If we see with clear eyes we may be able to do some small kindnesses oftener than 'once in a cat's age.' It's certainly true that the everyday troubles, the trifling annoyances, are really harder to bear than the big troubles."

"O-o-o!" disclaimed Helen.

"The big troubles give you a bigger shock, but then you pull yourself together and summon your strength, and strength to endure them comes. But the small matters — they come so often and they seem such pin pricks that it seems not worth while to call upon your powers of endurance."

"Yet if you don't you're as cross as two sticks all the time," finished Helen. "I know how it is. It's like having a serious wound or a mosquito bite."

They all laughed, for Roger, as if to illustrate her

remarks, gave a slap at a buzzing enemy at just the appropriate moment.

"Another thing that helps to make Aunt Louise a happy woman now is that she is at peace not only with everybody on earth but also with herself. If she makes a mistake she doesn't fret about it; she does her best to remedy it, and she does her best not to repeat it. 'Once may be excusable ignorance,' she says, 'but twice is stupidity,' and then she tells the tale of the boy who was walking across a field and fell into a dry well which he knew nothing about. He roared loudly and after a time a farmer heard him and pulled him out. The next day he was walking across the same field and he fell again into the same well."

"He set up the same roar, I suppose."

"A perfect imitation of the previous one. The same farmer came. When he looked down the well and saw the same boy he said disgustedly, 'Yesterday I thought ye were a poor, unknowin' lad; to-day I know ye're a sad fool.'"

Again they all laughed.

"She's always cheerful and always affectionate and she's as dear as she can be and I'm glad she's going to have this lovely house and I wish we had one just like it," cried Helen in a burst.

"We have a good house."

"But it doesn't belong to us."

"We Army and Navy people can't expect to own houses, my child. You don't need to have that told you at this late day."

"I know that. If Father weren't so keen on having us all together while we're being educated we wouldn't have been in Rosemont as long as we have; but I sometimes envy the people who have a home of their own that they are sure to stay in for ever so many years."

"When you feel that way you must think of the many advantages of the Army and Navy children. If your father had not been on the Pacific station when you were the Ethels' age you wouldn't have had a chance to see California when you were old enough to enjoy it and remember it."

"I know, Mother. I didn't mean to growl. I just thought that Father had as much money as Aunt Louise from his father, and he had his salary besides, and yet we haven't a house of our own."

"We've had a good many of Uncle Sam's houses, which is more than your Aunt Louise has had. But you must remember that her inheritance from your Grandfather Morton was accumulating for many years while her family didn't know where she was, while your father and Ethel Blue's father have been spending the income of theirs all along."

"Uncle Roger has had a lot of children to spend his on, but Father hasn't had any one but me," said Ethel Blue, whose life had been entirely spent with her cousins because her mother had died when she was a tiny baby. Never before had she thought whether her father, who was a captain in the Army, had any money or not. Now she saw that he must be better provided with it than his brother, her Uncle

Roger, the father of Ethel Brown and Helen and Roger and Dicky, who was a Lieutenant in the Navy.

"Your father is always generous with his money, but I dare say he is saving it for some time when he will want it," suggested Mrs. Morton.

"I don't know when he'll want it any more than he does now," said Ethel Blue.

"Perhaps he'll want to have a house of his own at whatever post he is when he has a grown-up daughter," smiled Helen. "You'd better learn to keep house right off."

The idea thrilled Ethel. Never before had she happened to think of the possibility of joining her father after her school days were over. Never having known any home except with Ethel Brown and her other cousins she had always seen the future as shared with them. The notion of leaving them was painful, but the chance of being always with her father, of being his housekeeper, of seeing him every day, of making him comfortable, was one that filled her with delight. Her blue eyes filled with tenderness as she dreamed over the possibility.

"I have lots to learn yet before I should know enough," she murmured, staring almost unseeingly at her cousin, "but it's wonderful to think I could do it."

The new idea would not leave her mind, though, indeed, she made no effort to drive it out. That the future might hold for her a change so complete was something she wanted to let her thoughts linger

on. She hardly noticed that Roger was gathering Dicky up into his arms to carry him upstairs to bed, or that there was a general stir on the veranda, betokening a move indoors.

"Miss Graham was at Dorothy's this afternoon," Ethel Brown said as she rose and picked up the straw cushion on which she had been sitting.

"Was she?" inquired Helen interestedly. "I wish I had seen her. I never have yet, you know."

"Neither has Ethel Blue. She and Aunt Louise and Dorothy and I went over to the new house and looked at the attic. She says she'll come over next week and help us about the bedroom floor. That will be ready then for us to talk about the decorating."

"Be sure and let me know when she is coming. What did she say about the attic?"

"She liked it especially because it had been sheathed, following all the ins and outs. She thought the irregularity was pretty. She suggested a closet for furs over the kitchen. It won't cost much to bring the refrigerating pipes up there, she says."

"That's bully. Aunt Louise may take care of my fur gloves for me next summer if the moths don't eat them up this year," promised Roger who had stopped in the doorway to hear Ethel Brown's report, and stood with the still sleeping Dicky over his shoulder.

"She suggested a raised ledge about fourteen inches high to stand trunks on."

"Then you don't break your back bending over them when you're hunting for something," exclaimed Helen. "That's splendid. She seems to have practical ideas as well as ornamental ones."

"She thought there ought to be a fire bucket closet up there, too. You know Aunt Louise has had them put in on all the other floors, but she didn't think of it there."

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Morton.

"Just a narrow closet with four shelves. On each of the lower three are fire buckets to be kept full of water all the time and on the top shelf are some of those hand grenade things and chemical squirt guns. They don't look very well when they're right out in sight. This way covers them up but makes them just as convenient. There is to be no lock on the door of the closet and FIRE is to be painted outside so every one will know where it is even if he gets rattled when the fire really happens."

"Are the maids' rooms to be on the attic floor?" asked Mrs. Morton.

"Two little beauties, and a bathroom between them. One room is to be pink and the other blue and they're going to have ivory paint and fluffy curtains just like Dorothy's."

"Did you think to say anything to Miss Graham about the Club's using the attic in winter for weekly meetings?"

"Dorothy did. She thought a movable platform would be a great scheme; one wide enough for us

to use for a little stage when we wanted to have singing or recitations up there. She picked out a good place for the phonograph, where the shape of the ceiling wouldn't make the sound queer, and she thought rattan furniture stained brown would be pretty, and scrim curtains — not dead white ones, but a sort of goldeny cream that would harmonize with the wood. There are lovely big cotton rugs in dull blues, that aren't expensive, she says; and if we don't want to see the row of trunks and chests against the wall we can arrange screens that will shut them out of sight and will also take the place of the pictures that you can't hang on a wall that slopes the wrong way."

"I don't see, then, but Aunt Louise will have an attic and we'll have a club room and both parties to the transaction will be pleased," beamed Helen, who, as president of the Club was always careful that the members should be comfortable when they gathered for their weekly talking and planning and working.

"Doesn't Miss Graham come from Washington?" asked Ethel Blue dreamily, half awakening to the conversation.

"Yes, you know she does."

"Fort Myer is just across the river; I wonder if she knows Father."

"Ask her when you see her," recommended Ethel Brown, and they all went in to bed as a clap of thunder gave promise of a cooling shower.

CHAPTER VI

SPRING ALL THE YEAR ROUND

IT proved to be quite a week later before the workmen were far enough along to make it worth while for Miss Graham to be summoned to a conference on the decoration of the bedroom floor, and when Ethel Blue met her at last she forgot altogether to ask if she knew her dearly beloved father.

There were several reasons why she did not ask. In the first place she had forgoten that she meant to; in the next, Miss Daisy was so absorbed in what she was hearing from all the Club members about their ideas for the bedrooms, and so interested in comparing them with her own practical knowledge of how they could be carried out, that no one who listened to her or saw her at work wanted to interrupt her with any questions that had no bearing on the matter in hand.

Not that she was not interested in the young people. She was thoroughly interested in them. She knew all of their names and sorted out one from the other immediately just from Margaret's and James's decriptions of them. She listened attentively to their suggestions and they all felt that she was treating their ideas with respect and that if she

did not always agree with them she had a good reason for it.

"I think she's the most competent woman almost that I ever saw," said Helen admiringly to Margaret as they stood at one side of the upper hall and watched her as she rapidly sketched for Mrs. Smith what she meant by a certain plan of window hanging.

Helen was greatly interested in new occupations for women and the fact that this woman had studied to be an interior decorator and had succeeded so well that she had orders from the suburbs of New York itself had impressed the young girl as making her well worth trying to know well. Helen was not drawn toward interior decorating — she had already made up her mind that she was to be one of the scientific home-makers educated at the School of Mothercraft — but she admired women with the courage to start new things, and this work seemed to her to be perfectly suited to a woman and at the same time of enough importance to be really worth while putting a lot of preparation into it. The dressing of shop windows seemed to her another peculiarly feminine occupation, hardly entered at all, as yet, by women, and capable of being developed into an art.

"The decoration of a room or a building ought to seem a sort of growth from the room or the building," Miss Graham was explaining to the Ethels. "It ought to seem perfectly natural that it should be there, just as a blossom seems perfectly

natural to find on a plant. I never like the phrase 'applied design,'" she continued, smiling as she turned to Mrs. Smith. "It sounds as if you made a design and then clapped it on to the afflicted spot as if it were a plaster of some kind."

"Too often it looks that way," Mrs. Smith smiled in return. "Come and see how we've arranged our sleeping porches."

As Miss Graham stood in the doorway that opened on to the porch of Dorothy's room, one hand resting on Ethel Brown's shoulder, Helen felt more than ever the power — for friendliness and good will as well as for the execution of her art — that this dark-eyed, dark-haired, ruddy-cheeked young woman possessed. Her nose was a trifle too short for beauty and her mouth a bit too wide, but her coloring denoted health, her hair curled crisply over a broad forehead, her teeth were brilliantly white, and the straight folds of her gown showed the lines of her strong figure as the strange dull blue-green of her linen frock, dashed with a bit of orange, brought into relief all the good points of her tinting.

"She makes you want to stop and look at her," Helen decided, "and you want to know her, too."

Mrs. Smith had arranged for three sleeping porches, one for her own room, one for Dorothy's, and a larger one outside of the nursery where the Belgian baby enjoyed herself in the daytime. This porch was also shared by Elisabeth's care-taker. Each porch was on a different side of the house, so

that they did not encroach upon each other, and each was somewhat different in arrangement.

"Did you originate this idea?" asked Miss Graham, as she examined the sliding windows by which the bed was to be shut off from the room at night and enclosed in the room in the morning. "You never need step out of bed on to the cold floor of the porch," she commented approvingly.

"I saw that in a sanitarium," returned Mrs. Smith. "It was desirable that the patients should never be chilled and the doctor and architect invented this way of preventing it."

"It's capital," smiled Miss Graham, "and so simple. When the inside sash is closed, the outside is up, and vice versa. Are they all like this?"

"Yes," answered her hostess. "Dorothy is to have a couch in that corner, and a table and chairs. There is to be a screw eye attached to the foot of the couch. A weight on the end of a cord will go through a pulley fastened to the wall, high up over the head of the couch. There will be a hook at the other end of the cord. When this hook goes into the screw eye and the weight is pulled, the couch will stand on its head and will be out of the way at any time when floor space is more to be desired than lying down comfort."

"Of course there will be some sort of drapery to cover the under side when it is hauled up against the wall," said Miss Graham with a question in her voice.

"Dorothy has something in mind that is going

to meet that difficulty, she thinks," answered Mrs. Smith.

"Are you going to have your room of any decided color," asked Miss Graham.

"I've been perfectly crazy for a rose-colored room, ever since I was a tiny child," answered Dorothy. "I've set my heart on this room's looking like a pink rose —"

"Or a bunch of apple blossoms?" asked Miss Graham.

Ethel Blue looked quickly at the decorator when she made this suggestion which at once stirred the young girl's imagination to a mental sight of a springtime tree laden with clusters of blossoms, whose delicate white was flushed with the delicate pink of the dawn. The suggestion appealed to her immediately as possible of a development far more exquisite than that which Dorothy had planned. Both would be pink, yet the fineness of the new color scheme seemed to her suited to Dorothy's slender grace. She could not have put it into words but she felt that Miss Graham had a feeling for color that enabled her to adapt the room in which the color was to be used to the personality of the young girl who was chiefly to use it. Instinctively she moved closer to Miss Graham and met her smiling glance with a nod and smile of understanding.

Dorothy liked the new idea.

"I think an apple-blossom room would be perfectly lovely," she exclaimed. "If Mother would only let me use wall-paper — I saw such a beauty

pattern the other day. There were clusters of apple-blossoms all over it."

"Are you going to use wall-paper," Miss Graham asked Mrs. Smith.

"Dorothy and I decided that we would not use wall-paper in the bed-rooms at any rate," answered Dorothy's mother.

"I wish we hadn't," pouted Dorothy, but she was cheered when Miss Graham nodded her approval of their decision.

"You're quite right," she said. "Apart from the sanitary side it isn't a good plan to paper walls until the plaster is thoroughly dry. This is especially true of a house built on the side of a hill."

"This house has such a wonderful concrete foundation," said Margaret, "that I should think it would be always perfectly solid."

"So should I," answered Miss Graham, "but there's always a chance that some part of the soil beneath may give a little when the full weight of a house rests upon it. The settling of a house for only a half inch or an inch would play havoc with the plaster on these walls."

"You think we'd better hold back the paper for a final resort?" asked Mrs. Smith.

"I never advise paper in bed-rooms unless there's good reason to do so," answered the decorator. "Here is what I should suggest for an apple-blossom room — though perhaps you have some ideas that you would like to have carried out?" she interrupted herself to ask Dorothy.

"No," said Dorothy, "as long as it's pink and pretty I don't care how it is decorated."

Miss Graham stood in the centre of the room now, noticing how the sunshine fell on the floor, the shadow at the end where the sleeping porch was, and the possible positions for the various articles of furniture.

"I seem to see these walls washed with a white which is tinted with a faint flush of pink," said Miss Graham slowly, as she thought it out. "That means a pink so delicate that it will not irritate the weariest nerves and will soothe to sleep by its beauty. The wood-work should be similar in tone but a trifle more like ivory. Do you know that chintz that has blurry, indefinite flowers on it?"

Dorothy said that she did.

"I saw a lovely piece of it the other day with a design of apple-blossoms. I should use that as a covering for your bed, your couch, your chairs, and for hangings for the windows. Then across one end of the wall — on that shadiest side,— I should throw a branch of apple-blossoms, painted in the same blurry, indefinite way in which the flowers appear on the chintz. I knew a man who was enough of the artist in his soul to do the thing as if the wall had suddenly grown thin and through it you could see an apple tree in blossom out in the orchard."

"I think that would be perfectly lovely," said Dorothy, and all the others expressed the greatest pleasure at the proposed scheme of decoration.

"Here is what I would suggest for the windows," said Miss Daisy, taking out her note book, and sketching with a few rapid lines the folds of apple-blossom chintz, falling straight at the sides, with a valance at the top showing a very slight fullness.

"Between these and the windows," said Miss Graham, "I should put Swiss muslin, either perfectly plain or dotted or with a fine cross-bar, whichever you like best. I should have those muslin curtains next to the glass all alike all over the house and the shades, too, so that the effect from the outside will be uniform and not messy."

"That neatness will suit Ethel Brown's ideas of what is harmonious," laughed Helen, and Miss Graham flashed her brilliant smile on Ethel Brown, who was nodding her approval of the idea as she listened.

"Now, how had you planned to finish the other sleeping porches?" inquired Miss Graham.

"We thought we'd better have a radiator on the one leading off the nursery," said Mrs. Smith.

"You'll have to be awfully careful about its freezing," warned Miss Graham.

"I suppose we shall, but it seemed as if it might be advisable with a child who has been so delicate as Elisabeth. You will see that the outer ledge of her porch is somewhat higher than either Dorothy's or mine and there are pieces of lattice work to fill in the openings on very cold nights. We thought we'd have out there a low play-table for the baby,

and one or two little chairs and a work-table and easy-chair for Miss Merriam."

"There are cotton Chinese rugs that are extremely pretty for upstairs porches," said Miss Graham. "One that is largely white but has a dash of green and pink, would be charming for Dorothy's porch. What color is the baby's room to be?"

"Ethel Blue wants us to have it pale blue."

Again a vivid look of appreciation came into

A Play-table for the Baby

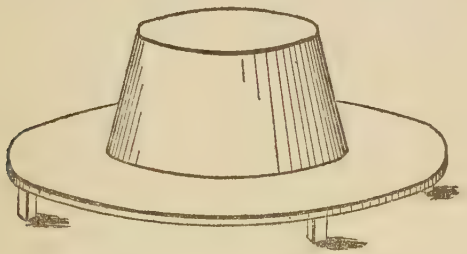
Miss Graham's eyes as she turned them on Ethel Blue, but she merely said, "There are charming Chinese rugs in white with dull blue designs like old Chinese pottery. Tell me what you had planned in your mind for Elisabeth," she continued, turning toward the young girl and extending her hand so winningly that Ethel found herself not only standing beside her with a feeling that she had been her friend for a long time, but filled with confidence that her suggestions would not be laughed at, and might indeed be really good.

"I thought of walls and paint of white faintly colored with blue. It was just about what you suggested for Dorothy's room, only blue instead of

pink; and it seemed to me that there might be blue birds — for happiness, you know — skimming along the walls, up near the top."

"One of those big Chinese rugs that is almost all white, but has a little blue, would be lovely, wouldn't it?" cried Helen, seizing the idea.

"Several small ones would be better," returned Miss Graham, "because a baby's room has to be



"There could be light blue cushions on the seat"

kept so spick and span that you want to have light rugs that are easy to take up and clean."

"You know those little round seats that you sometimes see in railway waiting rooms?" asked Ethel Blue.

Miss Graham said she had noticed them.

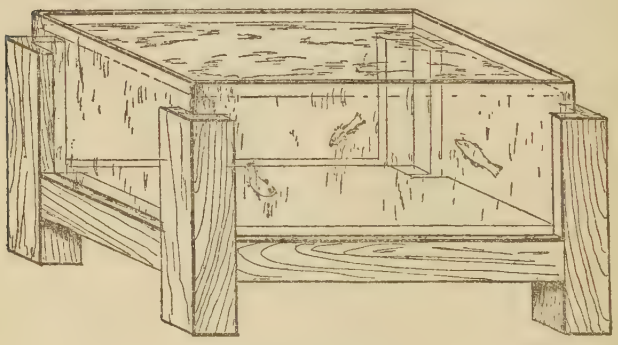
"Don't you think one would be cunning for Elisabeth? The seat part ought to be awfully low and there could be light blue cushions on it. And then I think it would be fun if there was a low bench running around two sides of the room, with cushions of the same color on it. It would do for a table and a seat both."

Miss Graham thought the idea was capital.

"How would you paint them?" she asked.

"Wouldn't a sort of bluish-white like the woodwork be pretty," asked Ethel Blue. "You know that shiny paint that is so highly polished that the baby's finger marks won't show on it."

"Enamel paint," translated Miss Graham. "I



Ayleesabet's Goldfish

think it would be very pretty, and I should have all the little chairs and tables painted the same way. There are a lot of little things that would be charming in the nursery," she continued. "You can have a solid table, whose top lifts off, disclosing a sand-pile inside. And some parts of that seat around the room ought to lift up so that the baby can put away her own toys in the box underneath the cushions."

"I thought a great big doll's house might fit into one corner so that it would be two-sided," said Ethel

Blue. "If the lower floor was all one room the baby could walk right in and sit down with the dolls."

"Do you think she could keep still long enough to make a real visit?" laughed Helen.

"You'll want to interest her in plants and animals as she grows up," suggested Miss Graham. "You might begin even now by having an aquarium with a few water plants and some gold fish and you must arrange to have it on a good solid stand so that it won't tip over if Elisabeth should happen to throw her fat little self against it. I suppose she's too small to have had any regular training as yet?" she continued, turning to Mrs. Smith.

"Miss Merriam, who is taking care of her, is trying some of the Montessori ideas."

"I thought perhaps she was. Madame Montessori tries to make all her training a natural outcome of the children's lives and to develop them to use what they know in their daily occupations. If Elisabeth had a clothes-closet small enough for her to hang up and take down her own dresses and coats and rompers, I think Miss Merriam would find that she would be trying to put them on and fasten them herself very soon."

"Wouldn't a clothes pole about three feet high be too cunning for words," exclaimed Ethel Blue, and Dorothy cried, "Do let us have all these things, Mother. Elisabeth will look like a little white Persian kitten, trotting around in this blue and white room!"

"Had you made any plans for your own room, Mrs. Smith?" asked Miss Graham.

"Oh, Aunt Louise, I do wish you'd have one of those gray rooms, with scarlet lacquer furniture," cried Helen eagerly.

Before Mrs. Smith could answer, Miss Graham had interposed a soft objection.

"I wouldn't," she said. "A room like that has several reasons for non-existence. They are very handsome because the real scarlet lacquer is beautiful in itself, and it's valuable too, but a room whose chief appeal to the eye is scarlet is not restful."

"You think scarlet is not a proper color for a bed-room," responded Helen.

"Not at all suitable to my way of thinking. It's exciting, rather than soothing. Another objection to it here is that a room containing such a vivid color should be a dark room, and all of your bed-rooms are splendidly light. But the most serious objection to my mind, is this. Just step out here in the entry with me for a minute."

They all followed Miss Graham on to the landing at the head of the stairs.

"In a house as small as this," she said, "you can see from the hall into all the bed-rooms. That means that from the decorator's point of view, the entire floor ought to be harmonious. Behind us, for instance, is the baby's delicate blue nursery. Just ahead is Dorothy's apple-blossom room. Do you think that a room of gray and scarlet and black is going to be harmonious with those delicate tints?"

They saw her meaning at once and agreed with her that it would not be suitable.

"I decorated a small apartment last winter," she said, "that turned out very happily. The sitting room was one of these scarlet lacquer rooms and the bed-room was done in tones of pale green and dull orange. You felt as if you were sitting in an orange grove in Florida on an evening when a frost was expected and they were burning smudges to warm the trees."

"I know," cried Dorothy, "I've seen them do that. You see the oranges gleaming through the misty smoke, and it's all hazy and beautiful."

"It turned out well in this room that I did," said Miss Graham, modestly, "but if you accept the blue and pink colorings for the other rooms here," she said, turning to Mrs. Smith with a smile, "I'm afraid your own room will have to be of some delicate tone to harmonize with them."

"There are certain shades of yellow, that would be suitable," returned Mrs. Smith.

"A primrose yellow," answered Miss Graham, "would be charming, and it would not be hard to find a lovely chintz, that would give you just the spring-like atmosphere that you'd enjoy having about you all the time."

"I think we're going to have this floor a little piece of spring all the year around," said Ethel Blue; and again Miss Graham flashed at her a look of understanding.

CHAPTER VII

CLOSETS AND STEPMOTHERS

AFTER they had shown all the rest of the house to Miss Daisy the family party gathered on the brick terrace outside of the drawing room to investigate lemonade and little cakes. The Ethels had brought the lemonade from home in a thermos bottle which kept it cool and refreshing, and that morning Dorothy had made some "hearts and rounds" which proved most appetizing with the cool drink.

A few canvas chairs which Mrs. Smith had sent over from home, so that she might have something to sit down on when she visited the new house, were all the furniture of the veranda, but the girls found several boxes which the workmen had left, and they laid planks on them and made benches that were entirely comfortable. A similar arrangement with the boxes turned on their ends provided a little table on which they placed the refreshments. Paper cups answered every necessary purpose, although they were not beautiful, and paper plates held the hearts and rounds just as well as if they had been china.

They were all a little tired after walking about the house for so long a time, and those of them who had chairs leaned back with satisfaction and looked over the low parapet to the adjoining

meadow with its brook and its cluster of woods at the upper end. Beyond the fields the Emersons' house could be seen dimly through the trees.

"We wondered in the springtime whether we should be able to see this house from Grandfather's house," said Ethel Brown. "I haven't looked lately, but I guess we can, or else we shouldn't be able to see Grandfather's house from here."

"The line of those far-away mountains is very beautiful against the sky," Miss Graham noticed, with her keen observation of everything that added to the loveliness of the landscape.

"They are far enough away to have a blue haze hanging over them," said Mrs. Smith, "and they give you a feeling that our quiet country scene here has a great deal of variety after all."

"Your house is admirably placed to make the most of every beauty around you," said Miss Daisy, "and I hope you'll allow me to compliment you on the way it is turning out. You know they say that you have to build two or three houses in order to build one exactly to your satisfaction, but I should think that you were almost accomplishing that with your first attempt."

"I am glad you like so many things about it," said Mrs. Smith. "Dorothy and I would be pleased with almost any house that really belonged to us, for we've had nothing of our own for many years, but of course it is a tremendous satisfaction to have this develop into something that is beautiful and livable too."

"You've added so many happy touches," said Miss Graham. "Take for instance this terrace. A brick terrace always makes me think of some old country house in England, with its dark red walls buried among the brilliant green foliage. So many of those houses have terraces like this, partly roofed like yours, and wide enough to be really an extra room."

"Aunt Louise's terrace is really two extra rooms," said Ethel Blue, "because it opens from the drawing room and also from the dining room."

"We're going to have all our meals out here in pleasant weather, whenever it's warm enough," said Dorothy.

"I can see you're sufficiently afraid of New Jersey mosquitoes to have a part screened."

"It's the only prudent thing to do," returned Mrs. Smith. "Jersey mosquitoes are really more than a joke, but if you have this wire cage to get into you can defy them. You can see that at the end of the terrace opposite the dining room our cage covers the whole of the floor, while up at this end only a part is wired in. In the evening when the buzzers are buzzing we can take shelter behind the screen, but in the daytime we can sit outside as we're doing now."

"Are you going to glass it in winter? I see you have a radiator."

"There are to be long glass sashes that fit into the same grooves that hold the screens now. The open fire will take off the chill on autumn mornings

and the radiator ought to keep us warm even when the snow is banked against the glass."

"With palms and rubber plants and rugs and wicker chairs and tables — I suppose you'll have wicker?" Mrs. Morton interrupted herself to inquire of her sister-in-law.

"Yes, wicker, but we haven't decided between brown or green," and Mrs. Smith turned appealingly to Miss Graham.

"Neither, I should say. Don't you think a dull dark red, a mahogany red — would be pretty with this brick floor?"

"And against the concrete wall. I do; and it ought not to be hard to find rugs with dull reds and greens that will draw all those earthy, autumnal shades together."

"You might have one of those swinging settees hanging by chains from the ceiling."

"Dorothy would enjoy that."

"So would we," interposed Ethel Brown. "I seem to see myself perching on it, waving my lemonade cup."

"Don't illustrate all over me," remonstrated Ethel Blue, dodging the flowing bowl.

"I like very much the seclusion you've gained by building up the wall at the end of the terrace on the side toward the road," said Miss Graham.

"We found that people could see from the road any one sitting on the terrace, although we're so high here," said Mrs. Smith, "but with the parapet

built up at that end, they can't see anything, even though there is an opening in the wall."

"And the window frames a lovely picture of the meadows across the road from you."

"I don't see," said Ethel Brown, "why you always call your living room a drawing room, Aunt Louise."

"It isn't a living room," returned Mrs. Smith. "A living room is really a room which is used both as a sitting room and a dining room. No room which is used for only one of those purposes should be called a living room."

"Lots of people do," insisted Ethel Brown.

"But they are not right," returned her aunt.

"Drawing room seems a very formal name for it," Helen said. "Of course we're used to it, because Grandmother Emerson always calls her parlor a drawing room, but she has a huge, big room, so my idea of a drawing room is always something immense."

"Perhaps it is rather old-fashioned and stately," admitted Mrs. Smith; "but the drawing room is simply a place where the family *withdraws* to sit together and talk together, and it need not be any more formal than the people who use it. But I protest that my drawing room or sitting room, or whatever it may be, shall not be called a living room, because it is not devoted to eating as well as sitting."

"I am glad you make that distinction," said Miss Graham. "So many people are careless about using the word and nowadays you seldom find a real living

room except in a bungalow in the country where people are living very informally during the summer, and where space is limited. There's another thing about your house that I like exceedingly," she continued, " and that is your closets."

Mrs. Morton, who had joined the party on the terrace, laughed heartily at this praise.

" That ought to please you, Louise," she said, and added, turning to Miss Graham, " Louise has spent more time inventing all sorts of cupboards and closets than in drawing the original plan of the house, I really believe."

" I know it wasn't wasted time," returned Miss Graham. " I have every sympathy with a craze for closets. You can't have too many to suit me. Do you remember that room at Mt. Vernon entirely surrounded by cupboards and closets? I always thought Washington must have had an extraordinarily orderly mind to want to have all his dining room belongings carefully placed on shelves behind closed doors! "

" I wonder how many different kinds of closets we have," murmured Dorothy, beginning to count them up on her fingers. Everybody tossed in a contribution, naming the closet which she happened to remember.

" A coat closet near the front door," said Ethel Brown.

" Clothes closets in every bedroom and two extra ones in the attic," added Mrs. Smith.

" A dress closet with mirrors on the doors, that

turn back to make a three-fold dressing glass. I envy you that comfort, Louise," said Mrs. Morton.

"You'll notice that the coat closets and the clothes closets all have long poles with countless hangers on them," said Mrs. Smith. "They'll hold a tremendous number of garments; many more than Dorothy and I have."

"The closet I'm craziest about is the one that is filled with glass cubes to put hats in," said Helen. "You open the door and there are half a dozen, and you can see the hats right through, so you don't have to keep pulling out one box after another, always getting the wrong one first."

"That's a perfectly splendid idea," approved Miss Graham. "I suppose along the lower part of the closet side of your room, you have small closets and cupboards for shoes and for blouses."

"I have my blouse closet above my shoe closet," returned Mrs. Smith.

"Did you notice the tall, thin closet for one-piece dresses?" asked Ethel Blue.

"I should think that would be splendid because it doesn't jam up your evening dresses," said Helen, who was beginning to think longingly of real, grown-up evening dresses.

"That's the closet Ethel Blue always calls the 'stepmother closet,'" laughed Ethel Brown.

"Why 'stepmother closet'?" inquired Miss Graham quickly.

"Because it would pinch a stepmother so hard if she got into it," said Ethel Blue.

Miss Graham looked puzzled and Dorothy explained.

"Ethel Blue hates stepmothers. She doesn't know why, except that they are always horrid in fairy stories, but she thinks this long narrow closet would be just the place to put a horrid one into to punish her."

"Stepmothers are often very nice," said Mrs. Morton.

"I had a stepmother," said Miss Graham, "and I couldn't have loved my own mother more tenderly, and I'm sure she loved Margaret's mother and me quite as well as if we had been her own children. In fact, I think she was more careful of us than she was of her own children. She used to say we were a legacy to her and that she felt it her duty as well as her delight to be extra good to us, for our mother's sake."

Ethel Blue listened and smiled at the kind brown eyes that were smiling at her, but she shook her head as if she were unconvinced.

"At any rate you might select your closet to fit your stepmother," Miss Daisy laughed, "and if you wanted to be very bad to a thin one, you could make her squeeze up small in one of the glass hat boxes, and a fat one would suffer most in this narrow closet of yours."

They all laughed again and went on with the list of closets in the house.

"You noticed, I hope," said Mrs. Smith, "that almost every closet in the house has an electric bulb in-

side that lights when you open the door and goes out again when the door is closed."

"Splendid," approved Miss Graham. "Is there one in your linen closet?"

"Yes, indeed. Did you notice that the linen closet is on the bedroom floor? There need be no carrying up and down stairs of heavy bed linen. The linen for the maid's room, in the attic, is kept in a small linen closet up there, and the table linen belongs in a closet made especially for it in the dining room. It has many glass shelves quite close together, so that each table cloth may have a spot to itself and the centrepieces and doilies may be kept flat with nothing to rumple them."

"I suppose the medicine closets will go into the bath rooms when the other fittings are installed," said Mrs. Morton.

"Yes," returned her sister-in-law.

"Did you notice the pretty cedar shavings that the carpenters left on the floor of the cedar closet?" asked Dorothy. "They say they always leave the cedar shavings they made, because people like to put them among their clothes to make them fragrant."

"I'm glad you are having a cedar closet," said Margaret. "Mother got along with a cedar chest for a great many years, but she has always longed for a cedar closet. She had one built this summer."

"We have both," said Dorothy. "The chest is going up in the attic and the closet is on the bedroom floor."

"The thing that pleases me most in the closet line," said Ethel Brown, who is a good cook, "is the pastry closet just off the kitchen. The carpenter told me there was a refrigerating pipe running around it so that it would always be cool, and there was to be a plate glass shelf on which the pastry could be rolled out."

"You certainly have the latest wrinkles," exclaimed Mrs. Morton admiringly. "I have never seen that arrangement in real life. I thought it only existed in large hotels or the women's magazines!"

"There are lots of other little comforts in our house," laughed Dorothy, "and there are two or three more kinds of closets if we count bookcases that have doors and cupboards to keep games in."

"They're every one modern and useful except that stepmother squeezer," said Miss Graham, rising to take leave. "That sounds like some invention of the Middle Ages when people used to torture each other to death so cheerfully."

"O, I wouldn't *torture* her," protested Ethel Blue.

"Unless she were a really truly fairy story bad one," Miss Daisy insisted. "Could you resist that?"

She held Ethel Blue's eyes for just a second with her smiling gaze that was graven down in the depths of her warm brown ones.

"I wouldn't *really* hurt her," Ethel Blue repeated, and wondered why she felt as if she had been taken seriously.

CHAPTER VIII

"OFF TO PHILADELPHIA IN THE MORNING"

"HELEN," called Mrs. Morton a few days later just after the morning visit of the letter carrier, "I have a note here from Uncle Richard asking me if I can run over to Philadelphia and attend to a little matter of business for him. He is so tied up at Fort Myer that he can't possibly get away. Do you think it would be pleasant if you and I went over for a few days and took Roger and the children with us?"

The "children" of the Morton family meant those younger than Roger and Helen. Helen received the suggestion with a cry of delight.

"It would be just too lovely for anything," she said, waving in the air the little linen dress she was making for Elisabeth.

"The younger girls had the Massachusetts trip this summer that you and Roger didn't share," her mother said. "I think this time we might all of us go, and I'm not sure that it would not be pleasant to ask the Watkinses and the Hancocks."

"The whole U. S. C.!" cried Helen. "Mother, you certainly were born a darling. How did you ever think of anything so perfectly galoptious?"

"It's natural for me to be 'galoptious,'" her

mother returned, laughing. "Now, we shall have to work fast, if we are going to accomplish Uncle Richard's errand, because the people whom he wants me to see will be in Philadelphia only to-morrow. He has telegraphed them, asking them to keep an hour for me, so I must go over to-day or very early to-morrow morning."

"Would you like to have me call up Margaret and Della on the telephone and see if they can go to-day? If they can, I don't see why we can't fly around tremendously and get our bags packed this morning and take an afternoon train," said Helen, who was beginning to grow energetic as the full prospect of the pleasure before her appeared before the eyes of her mind.

Mrs. Morton agreeing, Helen flew to the telephone, and was lucky enough to catch Margaret at Glen Point and Della in New York without any difficulty. They both said that they would consult their mothers and would call Helen again within an hour. She then telephoned to Dorothy, but found that she was at Sweetbrier Lodge and as the telephone had not been put in yet, she was, for a moment, at a loss what to do. She remembered, however, that Ethel Brown and Ethel Blue had spoken of spending the morning at Grandmother Emerson's, and she therefore called up her house in the hope that they might be there.

They had just left there to go and do a little housecleaning in the cave in Fitzjames' woods, where they frequently enjoyed an afternoon lemonade. Mrs.

Emerson said, however, that she could easily send a messenger after them, and that it would not be many minutes before she would ring Helen in her turn.

" I haven't anything to report," Helen said to her mother after she had made these various calls, " but I had better be getting out our handbags and trying to find Roger, I suppose."

Mrs. Morton was already packing her valise with her own and Dicky's requirements and she nodded an assent to Helen's suggestion.

It was not many minutes before the telephone bell began ringing. The first summons was from Margaret Hancock who said that her mother and father were delighted with the opportunity to have her and James go to Philadelphia in Mrs. Morton's care.

" It will be a real Club expedition," she said gleefully, " and I'm just as sure as if I saw it with my own eyes, that you're packing a ' History of Philadelphia ' in your hand-bag."

Helen laughed because she was well accustomed to being joked about her love of history.

" I notice all of you are willing enough to listen when I tell about places," she said, " and this time you'll have to take it from me because Grandfather won't be there to tell you."

The next ring meant that the Ethels had returned to Mrs. Emerson's.

" What do you want of us? " Ethel Blue asked in a tone that sounded as if she were not particularly pleased at being called back.

"How would you like to go to Philadelphia?" Helen answered triumphantly.

"Do you really mean it?" asked Ethel, who was not quite sure that her ears were hearing correctly.

"I do mean it, and if you and Ethel Blue want to go with Mother and me this afternoon, you must rush home just as fast as you can and get your bags packed. Aunt Louise says Dorothy may go, but I can't find her, so please stop at the new house and see if she's there and tell her about it."

"Well I should say we would," returned a voice that was now filled with delight. "Ethel Blue wants to know why Mother is going?" she asked.

"On some business for her father — for Uncle Richard. But do stop chattering and come home as fast as you can rush. If we don't get off this afternoon, we can't go until to-morrow morning and we shan't be able to stay so long in Philadelphia."

It was not until they reached home that the Ethels learned that the Watkinses and the Hancocks were to join the party, and they were so excited over the prospect of this Club pilgrimage, that they were hardly able to get together their belongings.

The most difficult person to find was Roger who did not seem to be within reach of the telephone anywhere. They called up all the places where they thought it possible that he might be, but he could not be found, and he walked in just before luncheon quite unprepared for the surprise that awaited him.

"Helen has packed your bag for you," his mother

told him, " so rush and change your clothes and go to the train to meet Della and Tom."

Rosemont being already part way on the road from New York and Philadelphia, it was necessary for the party to take a local train to the nearest stopping place of the Express. The Watkinses came out from New York on a local and the Hancocks arrived on the trolley, so that the entire group met at the Mortons' about half an hour before the time to start. They were all chattering briskly, all filled with enthusiasm for this new adventure.

" Don't you think I'd better go too? " Mr. Emerson asked his daughter, as he counted up the throng and noticed their eagerness.

" I don't think it's necessary, Father," Mrs. Morton replied. " Roger and Tom and James are surely big enough to escort us, and I know Philadelphia so well that I have no fear of our being lost in the city with three such competent young men to take care of us."

Mr. Emerson smiled somewhat doubtfully and murmured something about his daughter's having a hopeful disposition.

" You don't realize how serious Roger can be when he feels that he has actual responsibility," said Mrs. Morton, " and as for James Hancock, he is sometimes so grave that he almost alarms me."

" He may be grave, but has he any sense? " asked Mr. Emerson tartly.

" The children seem to think he has a great deal. At any rate I feel sure that no difficulty is going to

come to us with these three big boys on hand and I wouldn't think of taking you on this fatiguing trip, on such a hot day," insisted his daughter.

Mr. Emerson looked somewhat relieved although he again assured Mrs. Morton that he would be entirely willing to escort her and her flock.

"No farther than the Rosemont station, thank you," she said, smiling.

It was at the station and just as the train was drawing in that Mr. Emerson handed Helen a notebook.

"You've taken me by surprise this morning," he said, "and I haven't had much time to get up my usual collection of historical poetry, but I couldn't let you go off without having something of the kind to remember me by."

Helen and the Ethels laughed at this confession, for Mr. Emerson was so fond of American history that he was in the habit, whenever they all went on trips together, of supplying himself with ballads concerning any historical happenings in the district through which they were to travel.

"Philadelphia ought to be a fertile field for you, sir," said James Hancock.

"It is," returned the old gentleman, "but you'll escape the full force of my efforts this time, thanks to your quick start."

The run to the junction and then to Philadelphia was made in a short time. It was fairly familiar to all of them and the country presented no beauties to make it remarkable, although Roger pretended to be

a guide showing wonderful sights to the New Yorkers, Della and Tom.

"Do you think, Mother, we shall have time to look up some of the historical places in the city?" asked Helen.

"I thought that would be the most interesting thing to do," Mrs. Morton replied. "I shan't have to meet my business people until midday to-morrow, so this afternoon and to-morrow morning we can see many points of interest if we don't delay too long at each one."

"Being related to the Navy through my paternal ancestor," said Roger in large language, "Philadelphia has always interested me because the father of old William Penn, its founder, was an Admiral in the English Navy."

"I didn't know that," said Helen.

"Watch me run for base!" exclaimed Roger. "I got one off of Helen on the first ball. It isn't often that Helen admits there's something she doesn't know about American history."

"You miserable boy! You sound as if I were pretending to be a 'know-it-all'! There are plenty of things I don't know about American history. For instance I know very little about William Penn, except that he was a Quaker."

"Well then," said Roger, "allow me to inform you, beloved sister, that William Penn was an Oxford man and a preacher in the Society of Friends. He seems to have had some pull because the powers gave him a grant of Pennsylvania (that means Penn's

Woods), in 1680. He went to America two years later and founded this minute little town which we are approaching."

"Those old Englishmen on the other side certainly had a calm way of giving out grants of land without saying anything about it to the Indians, didn't they?" said Margaret.

"Penn got along much better with the Indians than many of the heads of the colonies. He made a treaty with them, which is said to have been very remarkable in two ways; in the first place he wouldn't swear to keep it because he was a Quaker, and Quakers won't take an oath; and in the next place, he *did* keep it, which was quite an event in colonial circles!"

"He must have been a good chap," commented Tom.

"You're going to see a statue of him as soon as you get off the train," interposed Mrs. Morton.

"Where is it?" asked Ethel Brown.

"On top of the City Hall. It's the first thing you see when you come out of the railroad station. In fact you're so close to the Public Buildings, as they're called, that I doubt if you can see the top at all until you get farther away from them."

"The statue must be enormous if it's up so high," said Ethel Blue.

"I've been told it was thirty-seven feet high," returned Mrs. Morton, "and that the rim of the old gentleman's hat was so wide that a person could walk on it comfortably."

"Wouldn't it be fun to do our back step on the edge of his hat!" exclaimed Ethel Blue to Ethel Brown, as they looked out the cab which was taking them to the hotel, and saw the figure of the benevolent Quaker black against the sky some five hundred feet above the ground.

The hotel wherein Mrs. Morton established her flock was "in the heart of conservative Philadelphia." Immediately after luncheon they packed themselves into a large touring car and began their historical explorations.

"If we do things according to time, we ought to go first to all of the places that have to do with William Penn," said Helen.

"I'm afraid that might make us jump around the city a little," said Mrs. Morton, "because if I am not mistaken, the house that William Penn gave to his daughter Letitia, is out in Fairmount Park, and the one belonging to his grandson is in the Zoo. We'll see them before we go home, but now we had better give our attention to the things that are here in the city. To begin with we can go to the little park on whose site William Penn made his famous treaty with the Indians. It takes us somewhat out of our way, but I know Helen's orderly mind will like to begin there."

Helen smiled at her mother's understanding of her, and the car sped northwards along the river front, now given over to business and tenements. At the Treaty Park they looked about them with their imaginations rather than with their eyes, for there

was little of interest before them, while the Past held a vision of the elm tree under which the group of broad-hatted Friends discussed terms with the copper-colored natives. Lieutenant Morton's children were interested in seeing not far away the ship building yards where many an American battleship had slipped from the ways to pursue her peaceful course upon the ocean.

Returning as they had come, they passed on Second Street the site of a house in which the Great Settler had lived, and promised themselves to remember that in Independence Hall they were to look for a piece of the Treaty Tree.

" Everything that isn't called ' Penn ' in this town seems to be called ' Franklin,' " said Ethel Blue, after reading many of the signs on the buildings.

" That's because the great Benjamin lived here for most of his life," said James, by way of explanation. " He was born in Boston, but he soon deserted those cold regions for a warmer clime, and made a name for himself here."

" I should say he left it behind him," commented Ethel Blue again as she read another sign, this time of a " Penn Laundry."

" Penn and Franklin are the two great men of old Philadelphia, without any doubt," said Mrs. Morton, as the machine stopped before Carpenters' Hall.

" Help! Help! " cried Tom. " I blush to state that I don't know Carpenters' Hall from a ham sandwich."

Helen looked at him with horror on her face.

"Stand right here before we set foot inside and let me tell you that I am perfectly shocked that any American boy, old enough to have graduated from high school and to be going to Yale in a few weeks, should make such a statement as that!"

She was genuinely troubled about it and Tom flushed as he saw that she really was scornful of his ignorance.

"Now, next," she said, "do you know what the Boston Tea Party was?"

Tom meekly said that he remembered that in December, 1773, a number of Boston men disguised as Indians had thrown overboard from a ship in the harbor, boxes of tea on which they refused to pay the British duty.

Helen nodded approvingly.

"I'm glad you remember that much," she said tartly. "After that Tea Party there was a continual and rapid growth of dislike for the Old Country, which was trying to tax the colonists, without allowing them any representation in the Parliament which was governing them. The feeling grew so strong that a Continental Congress, made up of delegates from the thirteen original Colonies, was called to meet here in Philadelphia, in September, 1774. It met here at Carpenters' Hall," she concluded triumphantly.

Tom glanced up at the Hall with an entirely new interest.

"In this same old building?" he asked.

"In this very identical place," said Helen, and

then she allowed the procession to enter the building.

"September 17, 1774," repeated Ethel Brown thoughtfully. "Why, that was the autumn before the battles of Concord and Lexington."

"Yes, the Revolution had not yet begun. The Continental Congress met to talk over the situation, and here are the very chairs the members used."

Ethel Blue touched one of them with the tips of her fingers.

"I'm glad I've touched anything as interesting as this," she said.

"Look at the inscription," said James, calling their attention to the lettering. "WITHIN THESE WALLS HENRY, HANCOCK AND ADAMS INSPIRED THE DELEGATES OF THE COLONIES WITH NERVE AND SINEW FOR THE TOILS OF WAR!"

"John Hancock was my great-great-grandfather's brother," said James proudly.

"Good for you, old chap," exclaimed Roger, thumping him on the back, while Helen beamed at Margaret.

"How long did these Congressmen chat here?" meekly asked Tom of Helen.

"After about a month they agreed on what they called a Declaration of Rights, and they sent it over to Franklin, who was in England, and asked him to present it to the House of Commons."

"In the light of after events I suppose the House of Commons didn't take a look at it," said Roger.

"They certainly did not," replied Helen, "and

the battles of Lexington and Concord were the result. You remember they were fought in April of 1775. Ticonderoga was captured in May of the same year and the battle of Bunker Hill was fought in June."

"And Congress kept on sitting while all this fighting was going on?"

"Yes; the men discussed each new move as it was made. Early in June one of the members made a motion before the Congress that 'these Colonies ought to be Independent.'"

"That idea seems simple enough to us now," said Tom, "but I dare say it was startling when a mere colonist proposed to break off with the mother country."

"It seems to me it's about time for Grandfather Emerson to have some poetry on this period of history," said Ethel Brown. "If he were here, I'm sure he would never have let this Congress sit for eight or nine months without discovering something in poetry about it."

Helen laughed.

"You certainly understand Grandfather," she said. "In just about a minute, while we're going over to Independence Hall, I'm going to read you some verses that belong right in here. On the first of July they began to debate about this proposal that the colonists should be independent. It was a mighty important matter, of course, because if they adopted it, it certainly meant war, and if they did not beat in the war, it might mean a worse state of affairs than they were in at the present moment. So

there was much to be said on both sides and it looked as if the vote was going to be very close. Here's where Rodney the delegate did some hard riding," and Helen took out one of the type-written sheets, which her grandfather had given her.

"What Colony did he represent?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Rodney was from Delaware," she returned. "Now listen, while I read you this poem."

"RODNEY'S RIDE

"In that soft mid-land where the breezes bear
The North and South on the genial air,
Through the county of Kent, on affairs of state,
Rode Cæsar Rodney, the delegate.

"Burly and big and bold and bluff,
In his three-cornered hat and coat of snuff,
A foe to King George and the English State,
Was Cæsar Rodney, the delegate.

"Into Dover village he road apace,
And his kinsfolk knew, from his anxious face,
It was matter grave that brought him there,
To the counties three on the Delaware.

"'Money and men we must have'm,' he said,
'Or the Congress fails and the cause is dead:
Give us both and the King shall not work his will.
We are men, since the blood of Bunker Hill!'

"Comes a rider swift on a panting bay:
'Ho, Rodney, ho, you must save the day,
For the Congress halts at a deed so great,
And your vote alone may decide its fate.'

"Answered Rodney then: 'I will ride with speed;
It is Liberty's stress; it is Freedom's need.
When stands it?' 'To-night. Not a moment to spare,
But ride like the wind from the Delaware.'

"'Ho, saddle the black! I've but half a day,
And the Congress sits eighty miles away —
But I'll be in time, if God grants me grace,
To shake my fist in King George's face.'

"He is up: he is off! and the black horse flies
On the northward road ere the 'God-speed' dies;
It is a gallop and spur as the leagues they clear,
And the clustering mile-stones move a-rear.

"It is two of the clock! and the fleet hoofs fling
The Fieldboro's dust with a clang and a cling;
It is three; and he gallops with slack rein where
The road winds down to the Delaware.

"Four; and he spurs into New Castle town,
From his panting steed he gets him down —
'A fresh one, quick! not a moment's wait!'
And off speeds Rodney the delegate.

"It is five; and the beams of the western sun
Tinge the spires of Wilmington gold and dun;
Six; and the dust of Chester Street
Flies back in a cloud from the courser's feet.

"It is seven; the horse-boat, broad of beam,
At the Schuylkill ferry crawls over the stream —
And at seven-fifteen by the Rittenhouse clock,
He flings his reins to the tavern jock.

"The Congress is met; the debate's begun,
And Liberty lags for the vote of one —
When into the hall, not a moment late,
Walks Cæsar Rodney, the delegate.

"Not a moment late! and that half day's ride
Forwards the world with a mighty stride;
For the act was passed ere the midnight stroke
O'er the Quaker City its echoes woke.

"At Tyranny's feet was the gauntlet flung;
'We are free!' all the bells through the colonies rung,
And the sons of the free may recall with pride
The day of Delegate Rodney's ride."

"Pretty stirring, isn't it! I take it that the Continental Congress had moved over to Independence Hall by this time," said Tom, when the reading was done.

"Yes, they were over here, sitting in the East Room, when they passed the Declaration of Independence."

An attendant seeing the interested faces of the young people, took them about the room and explained the relics to them.

"This," he said, "is the very furniture that was in the room at the time of the signing of the Declaration. Right on this very table the Document received the signature of the President of the Congress —"

"John Hancock," murmured Helen to James in an undertone.

"— and the rest of them," continued the guide.

"Is the original document here?" asked James, who was thrilling with interest, but who preserved the calmness which he inherited from his Scottish ancestors.

"No," answered the caretaker. "That is kept at Washington in the Library of the State Department, but there is an exact copy of it over there on the wall."

Going upstairs, the party remembered to look up the piece of the elm tree, under which Penn had signed his Treaty with the Indians, and they saw in addition the original Charter of Philadelphia, bearing the date 1701.

In another room they found some furniture belonging to Washington and Penn and various portraits of more historic than artistic interest. They enjoyed more seeing some of the boards of the original floor. These were carefully kept under glass, as if they were great treasures.

"Now we're going to see the most sacred relic in America, next to the Declaration itself," said Helen, leading the way down the staircase at whose foot was the famous Liberty Bell, which had rung out its message of joy on July 4, 1775, when the delegates passed the Declaration and the people of Philadelphia knew that war was before them, and yet were glad to meet whatever might be the outcome of the defiance.

They gathered in silence around the bell and read its description:—"PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO ALL THE

LAND AND TO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF." They noticed the crack which ran through it, and felt that they were looking upon a real veteran of that far-away time.

"Grandfather told me not to forget to tell you about the little boy who gave the signal to the bell-ringer," Helen said. "He was stationed where he could see the door-keeper of the room in which the delegates were sitting. When the final vote was taken, the door-keeper gave the signal to the boy and he ran out, shouting the cry that resounded through the colonies, 'Ring! Ring! Ring!'"

CHAPTER IX

HELEN DISTINGUISHES HERSELF

"COME out into the Park for a few minutes," said Mrs. Morton. "I'm perfectly sure Helen has some poetry to read to us before very long, and if we can sit down for a minute or two on the benches, we can hear it at our convenience."

"The fire of discontent had been smouldering for a long time," said Helen, beginning her lecture promptly when they were seated, "and just as soon as the Declaration was passed the flames burst out. There was fighting all over the colonies from South Carolina to New York City. Washington was made Commander-in-Chief of the little Army there, but he was quite unable to defeat the large force which the British sent. He retreated across New Jersey, and in December of 1776 —"

"About a year and a half later," interposed Ethel Brown.

Helen nodded and continued: "he reached the Delaware River. The British followed him on the other bank of the river, with the centre of the army at Trenton, New Jersey. On Christmas Night of 1776, the future of the Colonies looked about as dark as the night itself, but here is what happened,

told in some of the rhymes that Grandfather found for us." And Helen read Virginia Woodward Cloud's poem, called the "Ballad of Sweet P."

"She was a spirited girl," said James gravely.

"She was too nice a girl to be a deceiving girl," said Ethel Blue, and a vigorous discussion as to how much deception was fair in war time would have broken out if Helen had not continued her account of the Revolution around Philadelphia.

"At day-break on the 26th of December, Washington entered Trenton and surprised the enemy," Helen ended.

"It was in the battle of Trenton and in the battle of Princeton about a week later, that our Emerson great-great-great-grandfather fought, wasn't it?" said Roger, recalling the account which his grandfather had read to the Mortons several times from the old family Bible.

"Yes, don't you remember how he fought against his daughter's English lover?"

"We must ask the chauffeur where the Betsy Ross house is," said Mrs. Morton, rising and leading the way to the car.

The man knew and set off at once through the few narrow streets, and before long they were standing in front of the old-fashioned dwelling.

"Who is the lady?" murmured Tom in an undertone to Ethel Brown, pretending to be afraid that Helen would hear him but really speaking loudly enough to draw her attention.

"Tom Watkins, you're perfectly dreadful," Helen

exclaimed promptly. "Do you really mean that you don't know who Betsy Ross was?"

This direct question was too much for Tom's truthfulness and he broke into a laugh.

"I don't know that I should have known if I hadn't read the other day a tale about a play that some urchins wrote for the stage at Hull House in Chicago."

"Did Jane Addams tell the story?"

"She did, so it must be true. It was entirely original with some immigrant boys who had been studying American history. It went something like this: — in the first act some American Revolutionary soldiers are talking together and one of them says, 'Gee, ain't it fierce! We ain't got no flag.' The others agreed that it was fierce. In the next act a delegation of soldiers approached General Washington. They saluted, and then said to him. 'General, we ain't got no flag. Gee, ain't it fierce?'"

Tom's story was received with many giggles.

"What did Washington say?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Washington agreed that it was fierce, and said that he'd do something about it, so the next act shows him at the house of Betsy Ross. He said to her, 'Mrs. Ross, we ain't got no flag. Ain't it fierce? What shall we do about it?'"

"They didn't have a very large vocabulary," laughed Margaret.

"But the American spirit was there," insisted Mrs. Morton.

"What did Betsy say," inquired Ethel Brown.

"Mrs. Ross said, 'It *is* fierce. You hold the baby, George, and I'll make you something right off.'"

"Isn't that perfectly delicious!" gurgled Dorothy.

"And that last realistic scene took place in this little house!" said Mrs. Morton, shaking with mirth. "It belongs to the city now, so Betsy's patriotism and industry are remembered by many visitors."

"Here's Grandfather's contribution to this moment," smiled Helen as she brought out still another of her type-written sheets, and read some lines by Minna Irving.

"BETSY'S BATTLE FLAG

"From dusk till dawn the livelong night
She kept the tallow dips alight,
And fast her nimble fingers flew
To sew the stars upon the blue.
With weary eyes and aching head
She stitched the stripes of white and red,
And when the day came up the stair
Complete across a carven chair
Hung Betsy's battle flag.

"Like the shadows in the evening gray
The Continentals filed away,
With broken boots and ragged coats,
But hoarse defiance in their throats;
They bore the marks of want and cold,
And some were lame and some were old,

And some with wounds untended bled,
But floating bravely overhead
Was Betsy's battle flag.

"When fell the battle's leaden rain,
The soldier hushed his moan of pain
And raised his dying head to see
King George's troopers turn and flee.
Their charging column reeled and broke,
And vanished in the rolling smoke,
Before the glory of the stars,
The snowy stripes, and scarlet bars
Of Betsy's battle flag.

"The simple stone of Betsey Ross
Is covered now with mold and moss,
But still her deathless banner flies,
And keeps the color of the skies,
A nation thrills, a nation bleeds,
A nation follows where it leads,
And every man is proud to yield
His life upon a crimson field
For Betsy's battle flag."

"When was it that Washington made his historic visit to Betsy?" asked Roger of Helen.

"That was in June of 1776. A year later, on the fourteenth of June, 1777, Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as our flag."

"That's why June 14th is celebrated as Flag Day, I suppose," said Ethel Blue.

"I think our flag has more meaning to it than any other flag in the world," declared Roger. "The

thirteen stripes mean the thirteen original colonies, don't they?"

"There were thirteen stars at the beginning. They've added a star for every new state that has joined the Union."

"It certainly does make your heart beat to look at it, especially when you happen to come on it suddenly as Miss Bates said in those verses of hers that we had in our Peace Day Program on Lincoln's Birthday."

"A Russian sea-captain once told me it looked to him like a mosaic," Mrs. Morton said.

"But every piece of the mosaic is full of meaning," said Ethel Blue, "and mosaics make beautiful pictures any way."

"There was a sad time ahead for Philadelphia in spite of Washington's successes at Trenton and Princeton," said Helen, taking up her story once more. "The Americans were successful in Vermont and northern New York, but in September, 1777, they were defeated at Brandywine Creek, and the British marched into Philadelphia a fortnight later and took possession of the town."

"Wasn't it about that time that the American army spent the winter at Valley Forge?" asked Margaret. "I seem to remember something about their living in a great deal of distress, such as the soldiers in Europe are enduring now."

"This was the time," confirmed Helen. "Grandfather has a few lines of Reed's here telling about it."

"Such was the winter's awful sight,
For many a dreary day and night,
What time our country's hope forlorn,
Of every needed comfort shorn,
Lay housed within a buried tent,
Where every keen blast found a rent,
And oft the snow was seen to sift
Along the floor its piling drift,
Or, mocking the scant blanket's fold,
Across the night-couch frequent rolled;
Where every path by a soldier beat,
Or every track where a sentinel stood,
Still held the print of naked feet,
And oft the crimson stains of blood;
Where Famine held her spectral court,
And joined by all her fierce allies;
She ever loved a camp or fort
Beleaguered by the wintry skies,—
But chiefly when Disease is by,
To sink frame and dim the eye,
Until, with seeking forehead bent,
In martial garments cold and damp,
Pale Death patrols from tent to tent,
To count the charnels of the camp.

Such was the winter that prevailed
Within the crowded, frozen gorge;
Such were the horrors that assailed
The patriot band at Valley Forge."

"How long did the British hold the city?" asked Tom, after he had shaken his head over the Americans' troubles.

"Six or eight months," said Helen, "and you can imagine what a thrilling time it was for American girls like Sweet P. I can fancy them walking daintily along the street turning their heads aside when a British officer passed them, as if he were too far beneath their notice for them even to glance at."

They all laughed at the picture that Helen's words drew.

"When Sir Henry Clinton evacuated Philadelphia in the middle of June, he started for New York. Washington followed him but did not win in the skirmish which they fought at Monmouth, New Jersey. The Indians on the western frontier had joined the British, and there was some terrible fighting there. Our fleet, as a general thing, was successful on the ocean. Clinton stayed for more than a year in New York City. Washington established himself just above the city where he could keep an eye on him."

"Wasn't that the time when my old friend, Anthony Wayne, stirred up a little excitement up the Hudson?" asked Roger.

"Yes, it was then he took Stony Point, which we saw when we went up the river to West Point. There was fighting in New Jersey and in the South, and the British seemed to be getting tired out."

"It was at the end of several sharply fought fields that Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in Virginia, wasn't it?" inquired Roger.

Tom looked at him with exaggerated respect.

"It certainly is a great thing to be related to the Army and Navy. Here's Helen, a walking 'History of the Revolution,' and old Roger actually remembering something about Cornwallis's surrender!"

"Bah!" acknowledged Roger.

"They tell a story about the way that Philadelphia heard the news of the surrender," interposed the caretaker of the Betsy Ross house, who had been listening to the conversation. "There was an old German watchman walking the streets, and calling the hours through the night, as was the custom then. He cried out; 'Bast dree o'clock and Cornvallis ist daken.' People who had turned over in bed growling when they had been awakened by him before, were only too thankful to hear his hoarse voice croaking out the good news."

"That was in October, 1781," went on Helen, after nodding her thanks to the caretaker for his addition to the story. "It took a good many months for the British to leave the country, for transportation was a difficult matter at that time."

"I'll bet you the Americans were thankful to have peace," exclaimed James.

"It sounds to me very much as if the British were, too," said Roger. "Any country must be grateful for a rest from such long distress."

"Grandfather's poetry is by Freneau this time," said Helen. "I'm going to read you only two stanzas of it."

"The great unequal conflict past,
The Britons banished from our shore,
Peace, heaven-descended, comes at last,
And hostile nations rage no more;
From fields of death the weary swain
Returning, seeks his native plain.

In every vale she smiles serene,
Freedom's bright stars more radiant rise,
New charms she adds to every scene,
Her brighter sun illumes our skies.
Remotest realms admiring stand,
And hail the HERO of our Land."

"Who is the Hero?" inquired Tom. "Washington, I suppose."

"Yes, indeed," said Helen. "These verses were written when he was traveling through Philadelphia on his way to Mr. Vernon."

"I know enough American history to tell you that he didn't stay there long," said Tom, proud of being able to bring forward one sure piece of information. "He was made President on his war record. That I do know."

They all applauded this contribution. The caretaker of the house again could not resist joining the conversation.

"The five years after the signing of the Treaty of Peace in 1783 were very critical years," he said. "The new country had almost no money and no definite policy, now that they had cut themselves free from England. Somebody proposed a Federal Convention and it met here in Philadelphia in 1787."

"What did they want to do this time?" asked Margaret.

"Now they had to draw up some sort of Constitution for the new country. Washington was chosen President of the Convention and they worked from May until September in planning the Constitution, which they nick-named the 'New Roof.'"

"Yes, I know about that," cried Helen. "Grandfather gave me a poem about that. He thought we'd be especially interested in it on account of Dorothy knowing so much about the building of a house,"— and she read them the old poem called 'The New Roof,' by Francis Hopkinson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Come muster, my lads, your mechanical tools,
Your saws and your axes, your hammers and rules;
Bring your mallets and planes, your level and line,
And plenty of pins of American pine:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be,
Our government firm, and our citizens free.

Come, up with *the plates,* lay them firm on the wall,
Like the people at large, they're the ground-work of all;
Examine them well, and see that they're sound,
Let no rotten part in our building be found:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
A government firm, and our citizens free.

Now hand up the *girders,* lay each in its place,
Between them the *joists,* must divide all the space;
Like assemblymen *these* should lie level along,

Like *girders,* our senate prove loyal and strong:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
A government firm over citizens free.

The rafters now frame; your *king-posts* and *braces,*
And drive your pins home, to keep all in their places;
Let wisdom and strength in the fabric combine,
And your pins be all made of American pine:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
A government firm over citizens free.

Our *king-posts* are *judges:* how upright they stand,
Supporting the *braces;* the laws of the land:
The laws of the land, which divide right from wrong,
And strengthen the weak, by weak'ning the strong:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
Laws equal and just, for a people that's free.

Up! up with the *rafters;* each frame is a *state:*
How nobly they rise! their span, too, how great!
From the north to the south, o'er the whole they extend,
And rest on the walls, whilst the walls they defend:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
Combine in strength, yet as citizens free.

Now enter the *purlins,* and drive your pins through;
And see that your joints are drawn home and all true.
The *purlins* will bind all the rafters together:
The strength of the whole shall defy wind and weather:
For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be
United as states, but as citizens free.

Come, raise up the *turret;* our glory and pride;
In the center it stands, o'er the whole to *preside:*

The sons of Columbia shall view with delight
Its pillars, and arches, and towering height:
Our roof is now rais'd, and our song still shall be,
A federal head o'er a people that's free.

Huzza! my brave boys, our work is complete;
The world shall admire Columbia's fair seat;
Its strength against tempest and time shall be proof,
And thousands shall come to dwell under our roof:
Whilst we drain the deep bowl, our toast still shall be,
Our government firm, and our citizens free.

"Now that we have put the United States on a good running foundation, I think we might finish up our Revolutionary history by whirling out to Valley Forge," said Mrs. Morton. "It's a delightful ride, and I think we could do it comfortably in what is left of the afternoon."

"I shall be glad," said Helen, pretending extreme fatigue, "for these ignorant people have made me work so hard remembering dates and things, that I'm quite exhausted, and I'd like to sit still and view the scenery for a while."

The chauffeur said that he could manage the ride and even give them time for a walk when they reached their destination, if they were not in a hurry to return.

"I think it would be fun to come back in the evening," said Margaret, and they started off with great satisfaction.

As they passed Fairmount Park they promised themselves to see it in detail in the morning, but now

there was only time to notice that much of it had been left in a natural condition, which was far more beautiful than any results that Art could have brought about.

The road lay through a rolling country with pleasant suburban towns and comfortable-looking farm houses. At Valley Forge they felt like real pilgrims at a shrine, for they remembered the bitter suffering of the American soldiers and the even greater mental anguish of their leader, who sometimes felt that he had led his brave men into this distress, and might not be able to lead them to the victory which he must have, if the colonies were to become independent of the land they had sprung from.

Across the surrounding hills they walked, reading with utmost interest the monuments and markers which commemorate events and places and people connected with this fateful winter. Below swept the Schuylkill River, between peaceful banks, far different from those that hem it in farther down, as it runs through the great city.

CHAPTER X

THE LAND OF "CAT-FISH AND WAFFLES"

IT was a tired party that tumbled into bed that night but the long ride in the fresh air made them sleep like tops and they awoke the next morning entirely refreshed, and ready to start out again on their investigations of the City of Brotherly Love.

"To-day I am not going to open my mouth," said Helen. "I talked altogether too much yesterday."

"You were a wonder," said Tom, admiringly. "I wish I could remember dates the way you do."

"Hush," said Helen, with a finger on her lip. "My energetic grandfather blocked out the whole history of Philadelphia in the revolutionary days for me, so it was not my unaided memory that reeled off all that information. Any way, I'm going to sit back and have the rest of you inform me to-day about the places we shall see."

"What are we going to see?" inquired Roger. "Mother, you know this village; can't you make out a list for us?"

Mrs. Morton said that she had some suggestions to make and Roger jotted them down in a book.

"There are one or two churches," she said, "which have an interest because they are old, or have

connection with some important person or because there is some strangeness about the way they are built."

"I shall like those," said Ethel Blue. "I'm going to try to draw some of the doorways for Miss Graham. She asked me to draw any little thing about buildings that I thought would interest her."

"You'll see some old-timey doorways in Rittenhouse Square," said Mrs. Morton. "That is like Washington Square in New York, only here the whole square has been preserved in its former beauty. You'll find more than one doorway, and which will be worth putting into your sketch book."

"Would it take too much time to see the Mint?" asked James. "I shouldn't want to suggest it if it will take too long, but it would be awfully interesting."

"I had the Mint on my list," said Mrs. Morton, tapping her forehead.

"I'll transfer it from that spot to paper," laughed Roger.

"I hope we can get the same chauffeur we had yesterday," said Ethel Brown; "he knew a lot about things."

"I suppose he's accustomed to driving tourists," replied her mother.

As good fortune would have it they were able to secure the same car, and the good-natured driver beamed at them, as they stowed themselves away as they had the day before. Mrs. Morton told him the chief "sights" which they wanted to see, and di-

rected him to point out anything that they passed which would have some interest for the young people.

First they went over to the old part of the town along the Delaware, to find one of the churches of which Mrs. Morton had spoken. On the way they stopped at Christ Church. Its high box pews seemed to them full of dignity, and they imagined the elaborately arranged head-dresses of the ladies and powdered wigs of the gentlemen, rising above the old-fashioned seats. The pulpit was high up on one side of the chancel.

"This is the church that was presided over by Bishop White, the first Episcopal bishop of Pennsylvania," said Mrs. Morton. "He was influential in organizing the Episcopal Church in this country."

Out in the graveyard, whose quiet seemed strangely out of place amid the hurry of the city, they found many stones bearing well-known names, among them that of Benjamin Franklin.

"He died in 1790," read Della, from the stone. "Wasn't that just about the time Washington was elected President?"

"One year after," said Helen, who could not resist giving historical information. "The first real American Congress after the separation of the country from England met here in Philadelphia in 1789, and elected Washington as President."

"You can't escape a little history as long as Sister Helen is around," murmured Roger.

" It wasn't I who started it," retorted Helen.

" Now, children, be quiet. You may thank your stars that your sister knows so much about history," said Mrs. Morton; " it would be an excellent thing, Roger, if you stowed away some of it in your brain, too."

" Yes'm," answered Roger meekly.

It was while the car was on its way to the second old church of their search that the chauffeur asked James, who was sitting beside him, if he knew that " Hail Columbia " was written in Philadelphia.

" I certainly didn't," said James. " Helen, did you know that ' Hail Columbia ' was written in Philadelphia ? "

" No, I didn't know that," said Helen. " Tell me about it."

With his eyes on the road and his hands on the wheel the chauffeur told James, who repeated the story over his shoulder to those in the back of the car, that while John Adams was president, there was a war scare, because French vessels were supposed to be off the coast ready to attack American merchant vessels. A man named John Hopkinson wrote the poem, which was sung one night at the Chestnut Street Theatre.

" You mean our ' Hail Columbia '— the regular ' Hail Columbia ' ? " asked Ethel Brown.

The chauffeur nodded at Ethel Brown. Her memory for verses was always good and she repeated the first stanza of the stirring song.

"Hail Columbia, happy land!
Hail! Ye Heroes, heaven-born band,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone,
Enjoyed the peace your valor won;
Let independence be your boast,
Ever mindful what it cost,
Ever grateful for the prize,
Let its altar reach the skies."

They all joined in the chorus.

"Firm united let us be,
Rallying round our liberty,
As a band of brothers joined,
Peace and safety we shall find."

Almost on the river, toward the southern end of the town, was the church which the chauffeur called "Old Swedes Church," and whose correct name, Mrs. Morton said, was "Gloria Dei."

"How old is it?" asked Dicky who was beginning to understand that they were on a historical pilgrimage. They all laughed at his seriousness, and his mother answered.

"This building is only a little over two centuries old — but it's on the site of an old wooden church that was built in 1646. It was a Swedish church, originally, and then the whole congregation turned Episcopal."

"It doesn't look as if they lived around the church in any great numbers," said Tom, gazing about him.

"Most of the parishioners live now a long way

from here," said the chauffeur, "but they love the church because they are the descendants of the original founders, and they come from great distances to the morning services and stay to Sunday School, old people and young ones, too, and cook their dinner in the Parish House."

"That sounds like a New England village church to which all the farmers from around about come for the day," said Margaret Hancock. "I used to see them when I was a little girl and we went to New Hampshire for the summer. They bring their lunch and eat it under the trees between services."

"Since we seem to be doing churches, we ought to go to a Quaker Meeting House," suggested Mrs. Morton, turning to the chauffeur for information.

"There is one up on 12th Street, madam," he responded. "There's a boys' school connected with it that is very well known — the Penn Charter School. Lots of the old Quaker families send their boys there still."

"I don't suppose there would be a meeting today," inquired Helen.

The chauffeur shook his head.

"You wouldn't like it, any way," he said. "I'm a Quaker myself, and I know when I was your age it was awfully hard work to keep still so long."

"Is it worse than any other kind of church?" asked Dicky.

The driver nodded again, dexterously avoiding a big truck as he answered.

"The congregation just sits there until the Spirit

moves someone to speak. I've been there many a time when they sat for two hours and nothing happened at all."

"Dear me," exclaimed Ethel Blue, shaking her head gravely; "I don't believe I could keep still as long as that."

"I dare say it's just as well that there is no meeting to-day," said Mrs. Morton. "Any way, I don't know that I should approve of your going to a religious service out of curiosity."

Tom nodded in agreement with Mrs. Morton.

"I'm sure Father wouldn't like it," he said.

Tom's father was a clergyman in New York.

"He doesn't object to our going to other churches," he went on, "but he has seen so much of tourists who come to New York and go around the city, taking in three or four churches on Sunday morning merely to hear the music or some celebrated speaker, that he has always warned us children against being 'religious rubber-necks.'"

They all laughed and contented themselves with looking at the outside of the severely plain meeting-house.

The tour over the Mint was filled with interest for all of them.

"This is the oldest Mint in the United States," the guide explained to them.

"What's the date?" Helen could not resist asking, although Roger shook his head at her and Tom visibly smothered a smile.

"1792" the man replied. "We turn out gold

and silver and copper here and we've done a great deal of minting for South America, and, of late years, for the Philippines."

The boys were most interested in the processes by which the discs were cut out of plain sheets of metal and were then fed into tubes of just the right size to hold them, until they reached the stamping machine which gave them the impress they were to wear through life.

"Those new gold pieces are certainly beauties," said Roger, looking at the eagle flying through the air on one coin and then at the same majestic bird standing with dignity on another.

"I don't think this Indian has a very handsome nose," said Ethel Blue, critically, as she examined a five-cent piece.

"But think how appropriate it is,— the noble redman on one side of the nickel, and the buffalo of the plains on the other," returned James.

The girls were more interested in the coin collection in the Mint's museum. Here they saw not only American coins, from the earliest to the most recent, but coins of other countries. One of them was the tiny bit of metal known as the "Widow's Mite."

"The Widow didn't have to be very muscular to carry that around," commented Roger.

"But she must have had a separate bag to put it in or it would have been lost," returned practical Ethel Brown.

"There's nothing doing in the Academy of Fine Arts now,' ma'am," the chauffeur told Mrs. Mor-

ton, when she got into the car again. "It has a grand exhibition every winter but it's closed for the summer. Would you like to see the collections?"

The question was put to the party and they agreed that they would prefer to stay out of doors in this brilliant summer weather.

"We'll make an expedition to the Metropolitan Museum some day before long," promised Mrs. Morton.

"I wish we might do it soon," said Dorothy. "Miss Graham said she'd go with us, and I think we should learn a lot from her because she's half an artist."

"Let's ask her to take us as soon as we get back," said Ethel Blue. "I'm crazy about her, and this would be a good chance for us to be with her for almost all day."

"I'll see that you have your opportunity soon," her Aunt Marion promised her.

"We have time to run out to Mt. Airy this morning," suggested the chauffeur. "Then after luncheon, you could go to the Park and the Zoo in the afternoon."

"What is Mt. Airy?" asked Della.

"One of the finest deaf and dumb asylums in America," replied the young man proudly.

Della shook her head and the rest of them pulled such long faces Mrs. Morton could not resist smiling.

"I rather think these young people care more for human beings who can talk and hear," she said

to the chauffeur. "At any rate," she went on, looking at her watch, "I must meet my business appointment now, so I suggest, Roger, that you take our party to Wanamaker's. You can see a lot of interesting things there, and can have your luncheon, and I'll meet you there when I am through with my business."

So it was arranged, and the chauffeur was ordered for three o'clock to take them to Fairmount Park.

At the appointed hour his cheerful face greeted them once again. Because of the Mortons' interest in the Navy, they first ran south to the League Island Navy Yard. Even their familiarity with many Navy Yards did not lessen their interest in this one, with its rows of officers' houses and its barracks and mess-room. Just because they were so familiar with similar places, however, they did not stay long, and the car was soon whirling northwards to the opposite end of the city. They went through miles and miles of streets lined with small houses.

"These are the houses which have given Philadelphia the nick-name of the 'City of Homes,'" exclaimed Mrs. Morton. "You see, in New York people are crowded on to a small tongue of land, between two rivers. Here there are two rivers also, but the space between them is wider. There's nothing to prevent the city's crossing the Schuylkill and running westward, as it began to do many long years ago."

"These houses aren't very beautiful," commented Ethel Blue.

"They are very neat," said Ethel Brown. "But don't you get tired of these red bricks and white shutters, and the little flights of white marble steps, all alike? I don't see how anybody knows when he has come home. I should think people would all the time be getting into their neighbors' houses by mistake."

"It is much more wholesome for a family to have a house to itself, than for many families to be crowded into one building," said Mrs. Morton.

"I don't see why," objected Tom, who had been born and reared in New York. "The large buildings are wonderfully constructed now-a-days for ventilation and sanitation. They couldn't be better in that respect."

"That's true," said Mrs. Morton, "but a family loses something of its privacy when it lives in a building with other people. The householder is responsible for his own heating, his own side-walk, and so on, for all matters whose good care makes for the happiness of his family. The apartment dweller loses that work for the well-being of his family, when he lets go its responsibility."

"I dare say you are right, Mrs. Morton," said Tom, "but in these days of co-operation, it seems to me you gain something by uniting, as apartment house people practically do, to hire some one to take the responsibility of the heating arrangements, the side-walks, the ashes, and so on."

"It all depends on the conditions," returned Mrs. Morton. "In New York, especially on Manhattan

Island, where land is so valuable that buildings must go up in the air, such co-operation has become desirable, but where there is plenty of space, it seems better for every household to be separate as far as possible."

The chauffeur called their attention, as they passed through Logan Square, to the fact that this was the fourth city square they had seen since they had been in his care.

"On our way south from the Penn Treaty Park, we went through Franklin Square, and then you saw Washington Square when you were down by Independence Hall. This morning you saw Rittenhouse Square. Logan is the fourth. These four squares were laid out by William Penn as a part of the original design of the city."

Not far from Logan Square they were enabled to reach the bank of the Schuylkill, and the rest of the afternoon they spent in the lovely Park through which flows this river and the picturesque little Wissahickon.

Their first visit was to the Zoo, which the chauffeur told them was one of the finest in the United States. They invested in peanuts and small cakes and made themselves popular with the animals whose cages they passed.

Then they drove on, gliding swiftly in and out among the stately trees which the engineers of the Park had had the good sense to leave as they found them. Along the Wissahickon they noticed many small inns, all of which showed signs, inviting pass-

ers-by to come in and partake of "Cat-fish and Waffles."

"I can understand the waffle supply being limited only by the energy of the cooks," exclaimed Roger, as he read one of the numerous summonses, "but if they catch the cat-fish in the Wissahickon they must keep an army of fishermen out in the boats all day long!"

"I wish we could go out on the river," murmured Helen, as they whirled along the banks of the Schuylkill. "It looks so refreshing there."

"I think we can get a barge at one of these boat houses and go up the river a little way," suggested Mrs. Morton, turning inquiringly to the chauffeur.

"It's a pretty bit from about here up to a place called 'The Lilacs,'" he answered. "It's a pretty little club house."

"Oh, do let's do it," cried Ethel Blue, excitedly. "It would be lovely."

So they went to a near-by boat house and made the arrangements. The boats were large, with seats for four rowers besides the seats in the stern and bow.

The Ethels had learned to row at Chautauqua the summer before, so they occupied one seat.

The three boys each took one of the other seats, each rowing a single oar. Helen sat on the seat with Tom, Margaret with Roger, and Dorothy with James.

Mrs. Morton and Dicky sat in the stern, and Della played look-out in the bow.

It was a charming pull between shores beautiful by nature and gay with boat houses from which merry parties were establishing themselves in boats and barges and canoes. The rowers found the trip not too hard upon the muscles, even the Ethels saying that they were not at all tired, when The Lilacs came in sight.

The car met them at the Club House because they had to go back to the hotel and pack their bags in order to catch the train for home. The chauffeur had brought up with him a man from the boat house, to take the barge back where it belonged.

They returned over different streets to the city so that they felt that they had a good idea of the geography of the town.

"I've had a perfectly stunning time, Mrs. Morton," said Tom, as he bade her "Good-bye" on the train and thanked her for her care. "It has been splendid fun, and my only grief is that I am afraid Helen may have fatigued her brain, remembering all that history!"

Helen wrinkled her nose at him, but she laughed good-naturedly and agreed with him that the trip had been great fun.

CHAPTER XI

LIGHTS AND A FALL

IT was not often that Ethel Blue took a violent fancy to any one. Although she had something of the temperament that artists claim to have, she also had great reserve, and she found the companionship of her cousins, Ethel Brown and Dorothy, quite sufficient for her.

Now, however, she was filled with admiration for Margaret's aunt, Miss Graham. Miss Graham suited her in so many ways. She was good to look at, and Ethel found herself gazing at her wholesome, amiable face, filled with life and earnestness and fun, and enjoyed it quite as much as if she had great beauty.

Then, Miss Graham, because of her occupation as an interior decorator, knew something about art, and Ethel Blue wanted to know how to draw and paint, and how to appreciate pictures. She found that she never met Miss Graham without realizing afterwards that she had learned something from her. Perhaps it was only the meaning of a new phrase, or perhaps Miss Daisy called her attention to the light on the group of figures in some picture, or to the harmonies of color in the landscape. Whatever it was, it was not brought out in any

preachy way and yet Ethel Blue found herself with quite a store of information that had come from her new friend.

Miss Graham did not seem to single out Ethel Blue for particular attention. They naturally drifted together when there was a large party, because their tastes were similar.

"I think your aunt Daisy is nicer than any aunt in the world except my aunt Marion," Ethel Blue confided to Margaret one day.

"That's just about what James and I think," said Margaret.

"Has she finished her Englewood house?" inquired Ethel.

"Yes, that was done some time ago. That's why she has been able to go to see Mrs. Smith so many times recently. She has spent several afternoons at Sweetbrier Lodge, you know."

Remembering this, Ethel Blue went to the new house one afternoon especially to see if Miss Graham was there. She had no definite reason for doing so — she merely thought she would like to see her. By good luck Miss Graham was there, as she had brought out some samples of hangings to show to Mrs. Smith, and she was waiting on the terrace for her to come, and resting as she waited.

"I'm glad to see you, child," she called to Ethel Blue, and Ethel did not resent being called a child, for she realized that it was merely an endearing word coming from Miss Daisy's lips.

"Bring one of those canvas chairs over here be-

side me," she urged, " and we'll look at the view and talk a while."

" Isn't it going to be lovely when the real furniture is on the terrace here? " said Ethel Blue eagerly.

" The view is lovely, no matter what the chairs are," returned Miss Graham, smiling at her affectionately. " When do you think your aunt is coming? "

" I don't know. Did she expect you? Shall I run back to the house and tell her you are here? "

" No, probably I'm a little early and I shall enjoy sitting here and talking with you until she comes."

Ethel felt much complimented by this desire on Miss Graham's part and placed her chair beside her.

Their eyes looked out across the field with its brook and the trees that sheltered Mr. Emerson's house. Across the street the meadows, rich with the field flowers of late summer, stretched away towards the distant river, and beyond that were more trees rearing their heights across the sky.

As they looked a shadow fell on the meadow and moved swiftly across it.

" It looks as if some huge birds were flying between the earth and the sun," smiled Miss Daisy.

" Doesn't it go fast! " returned Ethel Blue.

" Notice the change in the color of the meadow, when the sunlight is hidden for a minute and then falls again on the vegetation."

Ethel Blue nodded, for she saw that the change was almost as if a sheet of colored glass had been held over a strong electric light.

"Sometimes during a thunder shower," she said, "I've seen awfully queer colors over in that meadow."

"The air is charged with electric particles sometimes," explained Miss Daisy, "and you are looking through them. You get different color effects during an ordinary rain storm, too."

"I think rain over that meadow is going to be one of the prettiest things Dorothy will see from this terrace," said Ethel Blue.

"She will have a long sweep to watch and a shower moves sometimes fast and sometimes slowly, so there will be opportunity to notice many changes," suggested Miss Graham.

"I wonder if Aunt Louise is going to have electric lights out here on the porch," said Ethel Blue. "They will draw the mosquitoes like everything."

"But she won't mind that because she can stay inside of her wire cage," answered Miss Daisy. "Surely she's going to have electric lights. Don't you see the wires already put in?"

"Of course," answered Ethel Blue. "How stupid of me! Those black ends are poking out all over the house and somehow I never thought what they were for."

"Then you haven't noticed the lighting scheme that your Aunt and Dorothy have worked out.

Let's walk through the house now, and see just how she has arranged it."

They went through the door of the screen into the enclosed portion and then into the dining room.

"Most people have one of those hang-down lights over the dining table," said Ethel Blue. "I don't see any wire for one here. I'm glad Aunt Louise isn't going to have one. They never are the right height. You always have to be dodging under them to see the person across from you and the light shines on the table so brilliantly that you're almost afraid to eat anything it falls on."

Miss Graham laughed at Ethel's vigorous protest, but she said that she, too, did not like a central light over the dining table.

"There is no need of a very brilliant light in a dining room," she said. "You can see the people about the table without any difficulty in a subdued light and the general effect is far more beautiful than when people are sitting in a glare."

"I think candle light is prettiest for the dining room," said Ethel Blue.

"It is prettiest for the table," replied Miss Graham. "The place where you really want a strong light is over the serving table behind the screen. You don't want the maid to make any mistakes just because she can't see clearly the dishes she is handling. There you need a strong light, but it can be placed so low that the screen shields it for the room and it will not interfere with the dimmer light of the rest of the room."

"I suppose there ought to be other lights in the room," said Ethel Blue. "You might find that there weren't any candles in the house some evening and then it would be awful to have only this light over the serving table and none of them in other parts of the room."

Miss Graham laughed at the possibility of such a disaster.

"There can be side-lights over the mantel-place," she said, "electric lights that look like candles, with pretty candle shades, and one or two similar arrangements on the other side of the room."

"Don't you ever put a central light in the dining rooms you decorate?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Sometimes I let the light flow out from a dull, golden globe set into the ceiling over the table. The glass of the bowl is so thick that only a gentle radiance comes from it and yet it ekes out the light from the candles."

"Ethel Brown is particularly pleased with the switch out in the vestibule," said Ethel Blue. "You see you can come home when the house is all dark, and light the electricity in the hall by turning on the switch outside of the front door. Wouldn't it be a good joke on a burglar, if he did it by accident some night when he was trying to get in," laughed the young girl.

"It's a capital invention," said Miss Graham. "You notice your aunt has side lights here in the hall. Have you ever happened to be in a house where they were moving the furniture about and

every piece that passed the hall chandelier gave it a rap?"

"That's the way it is in the house we're in now," said Ethel. "Every time any one goes away and the express man brings down a trunk, he hits the light in the hall. I don't know how many globes Aunt Marion has had broken that way."

Upstairs they found the same side-lighting in all the bed rooms.

"The theory of it is," said Miss Graham, "that when you want to see anything very clearly, you put in a light close to the place where you need to work. If you are going to arrange your hair before your dressing table, you want a light directly over your dressing glass. If you are going to read you turn on a light beside your reading stand. An upper light is usually for general illumination and a side light for real service."

"A combination of the two lights makes a room ready for anything," said Ethel Blue.

"I want you to notice particularly the fixtures that your Aunt Louise has selected for indirect lighting," said Miss Graham. "She has chosen beautiful bowls that look like alabaster. They turn upwards and the bulbs are hidden in them. The strong glare is against the ceiling so that the people get only the reflected light. There is to be one of those bowls on a high standard in the front hall, and one at the turn of the stair-case. They look like ancient Roman urns, giving forth a marvelous radiance."

"I think that will be prettier than some clear, engraved glass covers, that I saw the other day," said Ethel Blue. "They showed the bulbs right through."

"Far prettier," agreed Miss Graham. "The whole object of this indirect light is to make your room seem to be lighted by a glow whose real origin you hardly know. Of course your intelligence tells you that there are electric bulbs up there, but you don't want really to see them."

"It seems to me that people must be thinking more about how to make things pretty than they used to," said Ethel Blue. "When Ethel Brown's grandfather built his house, Aunt Marion says it was thought very handsome by everybody in Rosemont. It has lots of convenient things in it, and plenty of brilliant lights, but the fixtures aren't pretty and the idea seems to be to make just as big a shine as possible."

"Nowadays," said Miss Graham, "people try to make the useful things beautiful also whenever they can."

"I'm glad to learn all about a house," said Ethel Blue, "because some time I may have to keep house for my father and I want to know everything there is to know. Of course army people have to live in Uncle Sam's houses, but still there are always different arrangements you can introduce, even in a government house."

"I'm sure you'll be able to make useful everything you learn," said Miss Graham, "and your

father will be pleased with whatever makes the house lovelier and more comfortable."

"I've always meant to ask whether you didn't know my father," said Ethel Blue. "He is at Fort Myer, near Washington.

"Captain Richard Morton," said Miss Daisy. "Yes, indeed. I know a great many of the officers and their families at Fort Myer. I've met your father and I know him well."

"Isn't he the dearest old darling that ever walked?" said Ethel Blue, bouncing with enthusiasm.

"He certainly is a very nice person," agreed Miss Graham, smiling, "and he thinks he has one of the finest daughters who ever walked."

"Does he really?" cried Ethel Blue. "I'm so glad he does! You see, I so seldom see him that sometimes I'm afraid he'll forget all about me. Once when he came to Rosemont, I passed him in the street when he was walking up from the station, and he didn't know me and I didn't know him. Wasn't that perfectly frightful?"

"That was too bad," agreed Miss Graham.

"Somehow I've never thought of being able to live with him," said Ethel Blue. "You know I've always lived with Aunt Marion, because my mother died when I was a little bit of a baby, but the other day somebody said something about my going to Father later on, and I haven't been able to think of anything else since."

"I know he wants you," said Miss Graham.

"Has he spoken to you about it?"

"Yes, often."

"I suppose I'll have to be a million times older than I am now, before he thinks I'm able to take care of him," said Ethel Blue.

"I don't believe it will be a whole million years," smiled Miss Graham.

"I shall feel dreadfully to leave Aunt Marion and Ethel Brown. I've never been away from Ethel Brown more than three or four days in my whole life," said Ethel Brown's twin cousin, "but if my father needs me, why of course, I must go."

"Indeed you must," returned Miss Graham, "and I'm sure he wants you just as soon as he can send for you."

Ethel Blue was so overjoyed at this opinion, that she jumped up on the ledge on the top of the parapet running around the terrace, and danced with delight the fancy step —"One, two, three, back; one, two, three, back"— with which she and Ethel Brown were accustomed to express great satisfaction with the way in which life was treating them.

To Miss Graham's horror, Ethel Blue's enthusiasm blinded her eyes and her third back step took her off the parapet. She fell to the ground and rolled down the hill, her slender little body bouncing from rock to rock with cruel force and increasing speed.

Miss Graham gave a cry of distress and vaulted over the parapet with the ease which she had acquired in the gymnasium in her college days. Run-

ning the risk of rolling down hill herself, she bounded down the steep slope, and reached the foot almost as soon as did the body of the young girl, which lay very still, its head against the stone which had brought unconsciousness.

Miss Graham turned over the limp little form, shuddering as she saw the bruise on the forehead. She tried to lift it but found she could make no progress up the steep knoll. Again and again she called to the workmen in the house, and finally two of them appeared at an upper window and made gestures of understanding when she beckoned to them. They leaped down the hill with long strides, and soon were carrying Ethel Blue up to the terrace.

They laid her gently on the floor and ran to get water from the hydrant, while Miss Graham slipped off the young girl's shoes, raised her feet upon a block of wood that happened to be near by, so that the blood might flow towards her heart, and gently chafed her wrists. When the water came, she dashed a shower of it from the tips of her fingers on the pale little face lying so quietly against the bricks.

"Will I run to de nex' house an' telephone for de doctor?" asked one of the men, and Miss Graham nodded an assent and added a direction to summon Mrs. Morton.

Before either her aunt or the doctor came, however, Ethel Blue returned to consciousness. Before she opened her eyes, she heard a soft, affectionate

voice crooning over her, "My dear little girl, my poor little girl."

She kept her eyes closed for a minute or two, so pleasant was this sound from the lips of Miss Graham whom she had grown to love so fondly. When at last she opened her eyes and saw Miss Daisy's anxious face change its expression to one of delight, she almost felt that it was worth while to fall off a precipice to bring about such a result.

CHAPTER XII

IN THE FAMILY HOSPITAL

MRS. MORTON was acting as head nurse in the home hospital. Ethel Blue's injuries from her fall were not serious, but besides the bruises on her forehead, she had numerous large black and blue spots all over her body and she had been so shaken that the doctor thought it was well for her to stay in bed for a day or two.

In addition to Ethel Blue, Dicky was laid low for the time being. He had gone over to his grandfather's and as he was accustomed to run about the farm by himself, and as he usually stayed near some of the workmen, nobody paid any attention to him. This time, however, he went up into the pasture, where he found most of the cows lying down in the shade of the trees and meditatively chewing their cuds after their morning meal.

Dicky was not in the least afraid of cows, having been familiar with them from his babyhood. He therefore walked up to one of the prostrate creatures and sat down comfortably upon her neck, steadying himself by her nearest horn.

Nothing happened for a minute of two, for either his weight was so slight that the cow hardly noticed

it, or else his position did not interfere with her comfort. After a time, however, he began to pull at her horns in time with the motion of her jaws, and this measured movement seemed to annoy her. Shaking her head, she rose, first behind, throwing her rider even farther forward than he was, and then in front, tossing him off altogether.

The distance to the ground was not great, but it was far enough for Dicky to be peppered with bumps and pretty well shaken. The cow paid no farther attention to him but walked off to a spot where she might be free from annoyance, and the little boy lay for some time on the ground before he could pull himself together and go to his grandfather's. By the time he reached there, his bruises were already turning black and he was interesting both to himself and to his relatives, although he was manfully keeping back his tears. The doctor ordered him to bed for a day or two, and now he lay on a cot at one side of the large room which served as the family hospital, and Ethel Blue at the other, comparing their wounds, and receiving the attention of Mrs. Morton. She had finished reading one of the Br'er Rabbit stories to them when Ethel Blue introduced the subject that was so constantly in her mind.

"Did I tell you how I happened to fall off the terrace wall?" she asked her aunt.

"I wondered how you did it; you are usually so sure-footed."

"I was talking with Miss Daisy about my going

to live with Father by-and-by. You know I never thought of it until the other night when we were all together on the porch and Helen,— wasn't it? — said something about it. I wish I didn't have to wait to finish school before I can go to him."

"Are you in such a hurry to leave us?" said Mrs. Morton, with a little sigh for the many years of loving care she had spent over this child, who was to her like one of her own.

Ethel Blue was conscience-stricken.

"You know, Aunt Marion, I love all of you just like my own people. Only it seems so wonderful to think about being with Father all the time that I can't get it out of my mind — now it's in my mind."

"There are a good many things to be considered," answered Mrs. Morton. "You know that an officer often has to be away from home and your father wouldn't like to leave you alone."

Ethel Blue's face fell.

"If I only had somebody like Dicky's Mary to stay with me," she said, referring to the nurse who had always taken care of Dicky, and who had lived on with the family after he was too old to need a nurse.

"Perhaps your father might marry again and then there would be no difficulty about your being with him all the time."

Mrs. Morton made the suggestion gently but Ethel Blue flushed angrily at once.

"I think that's a perfectly horrible idea, Aunt

Marion. That means a stepmother for me, and I think a stepmother is detestable."

"Have you ever known one," inquired Mrs. Morton coolly.

"No, I never have, but I've read a great deal about them and they're always cross and mean and their stepchildren hate them."

"Don't you suppose that a great many stepchildren work up a dislike beforehand just because they read the same kind of stories that you seem to have been reading?" asked Mrs. Morton.

Ethel Blue was a reasonable girl, and she thought this over before she answered.

"Perhaps they do," she said, although slowly, as if she disliked to admit it.

"I have happened to know several stepmothers," said Mrs. Morton, "and I never have known one who was not quite as kind or even kinder to her stepchildren, than to her own children. A mother feels that she can do as her judgment dictates with her own children, but with her stepchildren she weighs everything with even greater care, because she feels an added responsibility toward them."

"But she can't love them as she does her own children," said Ethel Blue.

"I think there is very little difference," said her Aunt Marion. "I am not your stepmother but at the same time I am not your own mother, and I am not conscious of loving you any less than I love Ethel Brown. You are both my dear girls."

"I love Father but I do think Father would be

mean if he gave me a stepmother," said Ethel Blue.

"But, wouldn't *you* be mean if you objected to his having the happiness of a household of his own, after all these years when he has not had one?" returned Mrs. Morton promptly. "Your father has lived a lonely life for many years, and if such a thing should happen as his deciding to marry again, I can't think that my little Ethel Blue would be so selfish as to make him unhappy — or even uncomfortable — about it."

This was a new idea for Ethel Blue and she snuggled down under her covers and turned her head away to think about it.

Her aunt left her alone and the room was quiet except for the noise made by Dicky's little hands, as he turned the pages of a picture book.

It was almost dark when Mrs. Morton came back with Mary, each of them bearing a tray with the supper for one of the invalids.

"I must say," laughed Mrs. Morton, as she entered the hospital, "these are pretty hearty meals for people who call themselves ill."

"My mind isn't ill," said Ethel Blue; "it's just these bruises that hurt me," and Dicky understood what she meant, for he told Mary, who was arranging his pillows, that his "black and blue thspotth were awful thore," but that he was going to get up in the morning.

As Mrs. Morton leaned over Ethel Blue's bed, the young girl put an arm around her aunt's neck and drew her down to her.

"I've made up my mind not to be piggy if anything like that does happen," she said, hesitatingly. "Do you know that it *is* going to happen?"

"No, I do not," answered Mrs. Morton, "but I saw that you were in a frame of mind to make your father very unhappy if it should come to pass. You ought no to allow yourself to have such thoughts, even about an indefinite stepmother. They might easily turn into thoughts of real hatred for an actual stepmother."

"But do you think there *might* be a stepmother some time or other?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Yes, dear, I do. Your father probably seems old to you, but he really is not very old and, as I said before, he has lived a lonely life for many years. You know it was fourteen years ago that your mother died, and since then he has had no home of his own and no loving companionship. He has not even had the delight of helping to bring up his little daughter. If he can make happiness for himself now, after all these years, don't you think that his little daughter ought to help him?"

Ethel Blue nodded silently and ate her supper thoughtfully.

"While you two were taking your nap, I went to Sweetbrier Lodge," said Mrs. Morton, by way of entertaining the invalids. "I am so much interested in the way that Aunt Louise has arranged for the maids. You know so many people have only a servant's workroom, the kitchen; and the maids have no room to sit in after their work is done.

Aunt Louise has been very thoughtful in all her plans. The laundry and the kitchen and the pantry between the kitchen and the dining room, all have the most convenient arrangements possible. Every shelf and cupboard is placed so that the number of footsteps that the kitchen worker must take will be reduced as greatly as possible. Then there are all sorts of labor saving arrangements. You saw those in the kitchen and the cellar. The electrician has been there daily fitting up an electric range and dish-washing machine. The wires in the kitchen are placed just where they will be most serviceable, and there are plenty of windows so that the room is bright in the day-time. Then just off the kitchen, there is a delightful little sitting room, with a porch opening from it. It has a view toward the garden and FitzJames's woods, and it is to be prettily furnished."

"There are two bedrooms and a bath for the maids in the attic story," said Ethel Blue. "They are going to be prettily furnished too."

"Will they have a garden?" asked Dicky from his corner.

"Do you know?" Mrs. Morton turned to Ethel for an answer.

"I do understand now," she replied, "why Dorothy insisted on having the herb garden down by the house. I thought it was just because it would be convenient to have the herbs near the kitchen, but she planted flowers there too, and now I see that it

will be a pretty flower garden for the maids to enjoy and to cut for their own rooms."

"There are two things about Aunt Louise that are interesting," said Ethel Blue. "One is the way she always tries to make other people happy and comfortable."

"She is naturally thoughtful and considerate," said Mrs. Morton, "and she has had much unhappiness in her life and has happened to meet many people who are unhappy, so it has taught her to do all she can to brighten other people's lives and to make them easier."

"I don't believe many people who are building a house would let a lot of children say what they thought would be nice about it," said Ethel Blue.

"She wants Dorothy and all of you to learn about the new ways of building and fitting up a house," returned Mrs. Morton, "and she knows how much fun it is to talk over such matters in a general powwow. Haven't all of you had a good deal of fun out of it?"

"We certainly have," replied Ethel Blue. "I liked fixing up Ayleesabet's room particularly, because I suggested the idea, but we have all made suggestions for every room in the house. Aunt Louise has not agreed with all of them, but she always told us why she didn't agree or why she didn't like our ideas. She never was snippy about it, just because we were children. The other thing that is interesting in Aunt Louise, is the way she wants

to have all sorts of new arrangements in a house."

"Almost everybody does that," answered Mrs. Morton.

"I don't know anybody in Rosemont who has all the things that Aunt Louise has put in. People have vacuum cleaners now-a-days, that they move around from one room to another, but she has hers built in, so the dirt is drawn right down into the cellar. She has every kind of electric thing she has ever heard of, I do believe."

"The electrician was there to-day as I told you, arranging wires in the kitchen."

"I was trying to count up as I was lying here, all the things in the house that go by electricity. Of course there's the door bell to begin with. Then there are all the lighting switches — the one in the vestibule and all the regular ones in the halls and rooms and a lot of them in the different closets, so that she never will have to struggle around in the dark for anything she is hunting for."

"I saw a man putting in a little pilot light for the oven, to-day," said Mrs. Morton.

"What's that for?"

"So the cook can investigate the state of affairs in the oven. Sometimes it's hard to say how far along a dish at the back of the oven is. This light enables you to make out whether it is browning properly or not."

"The man who put in the summer water-heater called the little light that burns all the time in that, a 'pilot,'" said Ethel Blue.

"The dumb-waiter that runs from the cellar up through the house to take up kindling or whatever needs to be taken up stairs, runs at the touch of an electric button," said Mrs. Morton.

"I wish there had been an elevator for people," said Ethel Blue.

"The house isn't large enough to call for that," said her aunt, laughing. "Dorothy and her mother are able to go up one or two flights of stairs without much suffering!"

Ethel laughed at the suggestion, and went on with her enumeration of the uses of electricity.

"The city water runs into the house, but do you know that Aunt Louise has had an extra pump fitted into a deep well at the back of the house, and that is to work by electricity? She was afraid the house was so high up that the power of the town water might be weak sometimes."

"She's prepared for anything, isn't she? She'll be quite independent if any accident should happen to the Rosemont reservoir."

"You know the fittings of the laundry are electric."

"And the electrician to-day was going to put in an electric hair dryer in the bath-room, so that a shampoo will require only a few minutes' time."

"I see where all of us girls visit Dorothy on shampoo day," giggled Ethel Blue.

"She'll be as popular as I used to be when our cherries were ripe," her Aunt Marion smiled in return. "I never seemed to have so many friends as

during the June days when I always entertained my guests by inviting them up into the cherry tree."

"Was that the cherry tree on the right thide of Chrandfather'th houthe?" asked Dicky suddenly from the corner where he had been supposed to be dozing.

"The very same cherry tree, young man. I dare say you know it."

"It'th too fat for me to thin up," he said, "but nekthtyear I'm going up on a ladder the minute I see a robin flying off with the first ripe cherry."

CHAPTER XIII

A GOLDEN COLOR SCHEME

WHEN the time came for having the interior decorating done in Sweetbrier Lodge and for getting the furniture, the U. S. C. felt that they were really in the very midst of a delightful experience. The attic was furnished with brown wicker, as Miss Graham had suggested. A small upright piano was brought up through a window, and this pleasant, quiet room at the top of the house, served to give Dorothy a spot for practising where she would disturb no one. Up here, too, she could keep any work that she was doing and merely put it into a chest that she had prepared for the purpose, whenever she wanted to leave it, or, if it was something that could not easily be moved, it might even be kept out upon the table and there would be no one to be annoyed by an appearance of untidiness.

The piano was to be a pleasure at the club meetings, for all the U. S. C. members liked to sing, and Helen was planning that they should wind up every meeting during the coming winter with a good stirring chorus before they separated for the afternoon.

On the bedroom floor, the furnishings were car-

ried out as they had been planned, Elisabeth's room in blue, Dorothy's in pink, and Mrs. Smith's in primrose yellow, and the two guest chambers in violet and a delicate, misty grey. The wood-work was painted ivory white and the floors were all of hard wood. Rugs in harmonious tints gave the desirable depths of tone to the color plan.

On this floor Mrs. Smith had a sewing room and also a small sitting room, where she could write business letters and be quite undisturbed. With the floor below came the really serious work of furnishing, the girls thought. The drawing room was the important feature of this floor.

"Here is the family hearth," said Mrs. Smith to Dorothy, "and we want to make this room beautiful — one that people will like to come into and to stay in."

"It must not be cold in color, then," said Dorothy. "Nobody likes to stay in a chilly looking room."

"And it ought not to be too warm in color," said plump little Della, who suffered terribly from the heat in summer. "It just makes me perspire to *think* of some of the thick, heavy-looking rooms I've been in. They are only suitable for zero weather and we don't seem to have any more zero weather nowadays."

Mrs. Smith had allowed Dorothy to ask the club members to have cocoa with her on the afternoon when the final decisions were to be made. They had brought down from up-stairs some of the chairs and a table which had already been put into the bed-

rooms. Dorothy and the Ethels had made cocoa and had baked some cocoanut cakes on the new electric oven, and they were all gathered in the drawing room, sipping their cocoa and looking about them at the possibilities of the room.

"Before we begin, tell me how you made these cakes," said Margaret, who was always adding a new receipt to her cook book.

"We took half a pound of dried cocoanut and two ounces of sugar and three ounces of ground rice, and mixed them all up together. Then we beat the whites of three eggs perfectly stiff and stirred the froth thoroughly into the other things," said Ethel Brown.

"Then we dipped out a tablespoonful at a time and put it on to a buttered baking tin, and baked it all in a quick oven for five minutes," said Ethel Blue, "but we didn't take the tin out, right off. We let the oven cool and the little cakes cook slowly for half an hour longer."

"They do be marvellous good," murmured James, and all the others agreed with him.

Miss Graham had come over with Margaret and James, but she said that she was not going to give her professional advice until it was asked for.

"I may as well tell you first of all," said Mrs. Smith, "what my color scheme is for this room, and then you can help me with the details. I want the whole thing to be in tones of brown, lightened by yellow, and contrasted with that dull blue you see in Oriental rugs. Now, keep that scheme

of color in your mind and work it out for me."

"I think you must have told the painter about it before he did the wood-work," guessed Margaret. "This wood-work is white, but a yellowish white that will be quite in harmony with your brown and gold scheme."

"You've caught me," smiled Mrs. Smith. "It had to be done, so I told him what I wanted. It's successful, don't you think so?" she asked, looking toward Miss Graham.

"Entirely," approved Miss Daisy.

"The floors are hard wood, but I suppose you're going to have a big brown and gold and blue rug," said Helen.

"Certainly those colors, if I can find just the right thing," said her aunt.

"I was with Mother the other day in a rug shop," said Della, "and I saw beautiful Chinese rugs, with dull blue backgrounds and figures of brown and tan."

"I've noticed," said Helen, "that Oriental rugs have a great deal of red and green in them. I should think it might be hard to find rugs with just brown and blue."

"I have discovered that it is," said Mrs. Smith, "for I've already been on one or two searching trips. Still, those Chinese rugs that Della mentioned are always available, and if you hunt far enough you can get others with the brown note uppermost. What do you think about size?" she asked.

"Oh," said Helen. "I seem to see in my mind's eye a huge, great, splendid one in the midde of the room."

"It would be a beautiful rug probably," said Ethel Brown, "but I don't know that I should like one big fellow as much as two smaller ones."

"Why not?" asked Miss Graham.

"I don't know that I can tell you," answered Ethel Brown, blushing. "Perhaps it's because it makes the room seem too big and grand, and the arrangement of smaller ones would break it up into smaller sections, and make it seem more homelike."

Miss Daisy nodded as if she were satisfied, but made no comment.

"How do all of you feel about the size of the rugs?" inquired Mrs. Smith, and Helen put the question to vote.

They decided that they liked the idea of two or more rugs of medium size with little ones where they were needed instead of a very large one in the centre of the room.

"I think you're right," said Mrs. Smith, "and I think that it will be easier to find the smaller ones than the very large ones — and less expensive into the bargain," she said, laughing.

"What is the furniture to be?" inquired Tom.

"Dorothy and I had a few antiques that have been kept for us all these years from my father's house, and they have given us the note for the rest. They are mahogany, colonial in style, so we think

that we must make the rest of the furniture harmonize with them."

"Aunt Marion told me she saw some lovely reproductions of truly old chairs and tables and things," said Ethel Blue. "I suppose you can make the room look as if every piece in it was a truly old one."

"If I had money enough, I could undoubtedly find truly old pieces," said Mrs. Smith, "but I think I shall content myself with the modern pieces in the old style."

"At any rate, they will be stronger," said Margaret. "We have some very old furniture, and since we put steam heat in our house, they've been falling to pieces as fast as they could fall."

"How are the walls of this room to be treated?" asked James.

"There I want your help," said Mrs. Smith.

"I saw a dark brown paper dashed with gold the other day, on the library wall at Mrs. Schermerhorn's," said Roger.

"Too dark," cried the Ethels in chorus. "Mrs. Schermerhorn's wood-work is dark and Aunt Louise's is almost white."

"There's a kind of Japanese paper that looks like metal burlap," said Margaret. "It has a little glint of gold in it."

"That's too dark, too, I think," said Dorothy. "It ought to be something that will connect the yellow-white of the wood-work with the gold, which is the lightest tone in Mother's color scheme."

Again Miss Graham nodded her approval, although she said nothing.

"I saw a very wide pongee silk the other day that would be just about the right shade, if it could be put on like wall-paper," said Ethel Blue. "It would be a little darker than this paint, and it would tie on to the gold in the rug or in any piece of furniture covering."

Again Miss Graham nodded.

"And I don't see why it couldn't be stenciled," said Ethel Brown. "Something like the walls upstairs in the apple-blossom room, only of course something that would be appropriate for this room. But even if you didn't like that idea," she went on, "I think the pongee silk alone would be beautiful."

Mrs. Smith liked that idea, too, but she hesitated to give her final decision until she had examined a certain homespun linen which she had had recommended to her as a possible success from the point of view of color.

"Now that you have finished your cocoa, I want you to move your chairs over here, where you can look into the dining room," she said. "You see, I've had the dining room separated from this room by folding doors; there will be door curtains also, but I want to be able to shut off the room entirely from this room if I choose. Now, while we talk about the furniture here, look into the dining room and get the shape of it into your minds, so that you can regard it as a sort of outgrowth of this room. Are you comfortable now?"

They said they were and went on to discuss the furniture.

"Will all of the pieces be upholstered with the same material?" asked Ethel Blue.

"Oh, no," cried Ethel Brown. "Let's have two or three different shades of brown, and one in the right shade of yellow and one or two in the same dull blue of the rug."

Again Miss Graham nodded.

"You want to repeat in the furniture the colors of the rug," she said. "They give you a wide range of tones because these Oriental rugs may have as many as twenty-five shades of blue, so finely graduated that you can hardly tell them apart, except with a reading glass. The brown and gold of the furniture will bring out the brown and gold of the floor covering and you must be careful that the yellow of the furniture is not so brilliant as to overpower the more delicate yellow of your walls. There should be a sort of scale from the yellowish white wood-work which is your highest note, down to the darkest shade of brown."

"Now, that we've decided about the furniture, tell me what general idea you have for the dining room," said Mrs. Smith. "I'm all excitement to hear what you have to say about the dining room, because it isn't quite clear in my own mind, and I want to work it out with you."

"You want it to be an outgrowth of this room," said Helen, "and you don't want it treated like an entirely separate room."

"Since it is connected with this room by so wide an opening, when the doors are drawn back," said her aunt, "it seems to me as if it ought to be in harmony with the coloring here."

They all agreed with this idea.

"I suggest," said Margaret, "that the whole room might be a little darker than this room, although decorated with the same colors."

Miss Graham again approved this.

"It has the morning sun," said Dorothy, "and at night through most of the year the gas is lighted at dinner time so it isn't necessary to have it so bright as the other room."

"Then why not have everything the same, except just a little deeper in tone," said Ethel Blue. "Have the wood-work a trifle darker and find some material for the walls or have them color-washed a few shades darker than the pongee. The floor is a little darker than this anyway and one of the darker blue Chinese rugs will be lovely on it."

"Mother's china is blue Canton," said Dorothy. "That will give blue touch that will harmonize with the rugs."

They were all pleased with their decisions and were greatly pleased when Miss Graham approved their wisdom.

The electricians had put in the electric fixtures and they noticed that the dining room side lights of both the dining room and drawing room looked like sconces; that there was a glowing bowl of light in the ceiling above the dinner table; and that the

half concealed lights were to give a pleasant radiance in the larger room, while plugs around the wall permitted the use of electric lamps for reading or sewing at many different points.

"How is this little reception room to be done, Mrs. Smith?" asked James as he roamed into a small room just beside the front door.

"This whole floor, all in all, is to have the same color scheme," said Mrs. Smith. "I think this and the hall will be done like the dining room."

"Come out now, and see the maid's sitting room," cried Dorothy. "It is the cunningest thing and so pretty."

The wicker furniture had already come for this room and the attic, and they all exclaimed at the delicate shade of gray rattan which made a charming back-ground for cushions of flowered chintz.

"I think it's a dear duck of a room!" said Ethel Brown.

"And see the roses on the walls!" exclaimed Dorothy. "And it opens on to a little porch that is going to be covered with rambler roses all summer, if I can possibly make them grow and blossom."

"How many of you people can go to the Metropolitan Museum with me on Saturday?" asked Miss Graham. "I know you younger ones are all busy in school now, and the boys are getting ready to go to college, so that is your only day, for we want plenty of time."

There was not one of them who could not go, so

they arranged about trains and where they should pick up the Watkinses in New York, and separated with pleasant expectations of the very good time ahead of them.

CHAPTER XIV

AT THE METROPOLITAN

DICKY, the Honorary Member of the United Service Club, had been considered too young to become a member of the party to visit the Metropolitan Museum. He had, however, begged so hard not to be left behind, that Helen and Roger had relented, and had promised to take him if he, in his turn, would agree not to bother Miss Graham by asking more than a million questions every ten minutes. He was also under bond not to stray away from the party.

As it turned out, however, the Honorary Member did not go to New York on the appointed day. He had planned an expedition of his own for purposes of investigation, and the results were such that he was not able to meet his other engagement later on.

Underneath his bobbed hair Dicky kept a sharp pair of ears and there was very little of the talk about his aunt's new house that had escaped his attention. Among other things he had listened while his sisters and cousins had commented upon the manner in which the kitchen was equipped. The floor was concrete, the walls were of white tile, the shelves

were of glass, and the cupboard doors of enameled metal.

He had heard his mother say to his Aunt Louise: "Why, you could turn the hose on it to clean it, couldn't you?"

The idea had inflamed his imagination and he determined to see how it would work. Detaching the hose and spray from the bath-room he trotted off immediately after breakfast, intent on putting into effect his mother's idea. It seemed to him that it would be a delight to live in a house where one might enter into the kitchen at any moment and find the cook spraying the walls with a hose. If the reality proved to be as charming as the anticipation, he was going to beg his mother to have their own kitchen made over promptly.

The workmen were all upstairs at Sweetbrier Lodge but the lower doors were open so that there was no difficulty in achieving an entrance. He knew how to attach the spray to the faucet and a twist of the fingers turned on the water.

It seemed to him as the first dash struck him full in the face, he having been a little careless about the nozzle, that his Aunt Louise need not have worried about the pressure of the town water. He shook his head like a pussy cat in the rain, but manfully restrained the ejaculation that leaped to his lips. He was glad that he did, because nobody interrupted and the succeeding moments were filled with ecstasy. He sprayed the floor, the electric range, the shiny white table, the glistening cup-

boards, and, best of all, the gleaming tiles of the walls down which the drops chased each other in a joyous race for the floor.

The moments sped in this entrancing pursuit.

At home a cry for Dicky had arisen as the time came to dress him for his trip to New York. Nobody knew where he had gone. It was not until Ethel Brown telephoned to Dorothy that they learned that he had been seen passing her house.

"He must have gone to Sweetbrier Lodge for some reason or other," said Ethel Brown. "What on earth possessed him on this morning of all mornings!"

She called to Roger, and he dashed off on the run to see if he could find his wandering brother. None of the workmen at the new house had any knowledge of his whereabouts, and it was not until Roger opened one of the carefully closed doors and was greeted by a dash of water, straight in his waistcoat, that he found the wanderer.

Roger was a boy of even temper but he confessed to his mother afterwards that his fingers ached as never before to impress on Dicky his disapproval of his occupation.

"What on earth are you doing here?" he demanded, snatching the hose from Dicky's reluctant fingers, and turning off the water.

"Washing down the walls," replied Dicky truthfully.

"Incidentally you've given yourself a good soaking," said Roger, looking at the thoroughly drenched

little figure before him. "Here, slip into this coat, and I hope I haven't got to carry you home the whole way, you big, heavy creature."

"I think I'd be warmer if I trotted myself," suggested Dicky, a little apprehensive of what might happen to him in the way of a bear hug, in his brother's strong arms.

"I guess you're right," said Roger. "We'll have to run like deer, for it's almost time for the car to come for us. This puts an end to your going into town, I suppose you understand, young man."

Dicky had not thought of losing his other joy while he was realizing his first delight, and he puckered his face for a howl, but before the sound could come out, Roger said: "You brought it on to yourself, so don't yell. This is the natural result of what you've been doing. You can't expect ten people to wait for you to be thoroughly dried and got ready to go into town, can you?"

Dicky was an uncommonly reasonable child and he swallowed his sobs as he shook his head. There was no farther conversation, for both boys were running as fast as Roger's legs could set the pace. Dicky's strides were assisted by his brother, who seized his arm and helped him over the ground with giant steps.

Mrs. Morton's view of the situation seemed to be painfully like Roger's, and Dicky found himself put into the care of Mary and an unnaturally rough bath towel, his only part in the expedition that had promised such happiness to him, being the sight of

his relatives climbing into his grandfather's automobile and dashing off toward Glen Point, where they were to pick up Miss Graham and the Hancocks.

When the party reached New York they made up their minds that they might as well approach the Museum containing many beautiful objects by the prettiest way possible, so at 59th Street the car swept into Central Park. As they entered, Miss Graham called their attention to the golden statue of General Sherman, made by the famous sculptor, Saint-Gaudens. As they neared the Museum, she pointed out Cleopatra's needle, an Egyptian shaft covered with hieroglyphics.

"The poor old stone has had a hard time in this climate," said Roger. "It has scaled off terribly, hasn't it?"

"They are trying to preserve it by a preparation of parafine," said Miss Graham.

"I should think it would have to be repeated every winter," said Helen. "It doesn't seem as if parafine was much of a protection against heavy frost."

Just inside the entrance of the building they found Della and Tom awaiting them. Miss Graham called their attention first to the tapestries hanging in the entrance hall, and told them something of the patient work that went into the production of one of these great sheets of painstaking embroidery.

"Are they making them anywhere, nowadays?" asked Ethel Blue.

"When the war is over and you go to Paris, you

can see the tapestry workers in the Gobelins factory," said Miss Daisy. "Every machine has hung upon it the picture which the worker is copying. It may take a man six or seven years to complete one piece."

"Shouldn't you think he would be sick to death of it!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"I suppose the first year he tells himself he must be pleasant, so that he will see the picture get started. In the second year perhaps he'll be ready to put in the feet of his figures. Then all the middle years must be comparatively exciting because he's doing the central part of the picture; and the last year he has a sort of a thrill because it's almost done, even though the work may be all in the clouds."

"I judge that they make landscapes with figures, chiefly," guessed James.

"Many of them are landscapes with figures," replied Miss Daisy. "They have a wide variety of objects. The factory belongs to the government and the pieces are used as decorations for government buildings, and as gifts to people of other countries. The French Government gave Miss Alice Roosevelt a piece of Gobelin when she was married. I've seen it on exhibition in the Art Museum at Cincinnati."

"I suppose all the workmen now have gone to the war, and the factory is closed," said Tom.

"Probably. The men who work there now are descendants, sometimes in the third or fourth gene-

ration, of the early workers. They hold their positions for life and although their pay is not large they also have each a cottage and piece of land on the grounds of the factory."

As the U. S. C. ascended the great stair-way they passed numerous impressive busts and stopped to look at all of them. Most of the men were famous Americans, whose names were already familiar to the young people.

"Now," said Miss Graham, as they reached the head of the stairs, "later on we can choose the kind of thing we would like especially to see, but first I want to show you two or three pictures and we can talk a little about them. Then perhaps we will enjoy better the pictures we see afterwards."

"I am sure we shall," answered Roger, politely, although his heart was yearning for the Riggs collection of armor.

Miss Daisy read his mind.

"I know you want to see the Riggs armor most of all," she said, "and Margaret and James have been talking a lot about the Morgan collection and the Ethels told me on the way in that they had seen in the Sunday papers reproductions of some of the pictures in the Altman collections and they want to see the originals. We can see all those later on, but first we will look for a minute at a very famous picture by a Frenchwoman, Rosa Bonheur."

"Oh, I remember about her," said Helen. "She used to wear men's clothes when she was working in her studio. She said skirts bothered her."

"I should think they would," said James. "I remember about her, too. She made a specialty of animals and sometimes she had lions and other wild animals from some Zoo, and let them wander about. She needed to be dressed so she could skip lively if they made any demonstration!"

"Those are huge horses, aren't they," said Ethel Blue, as they stood before the "Horse Fair."

"They look as if they were 'feeling gayly,' as the North Carolina mountaineers say," quoted Dorothy.

"What is it all about?" asked Miss Graham.

"Why, I don't know," answered Ethel Blue slowly. "Is it about anything in particular? Isn't it just a lot of horses being taken to a Horse Fair for exhibiton?"

Miss Graham nodded and said that that was probably all there was to it. Then she led them to a picture by a French artist, Meissonier.

"I spot Napoleon," said Tom promptly, as they took up their position.

"This is called 'Friedland, 1807,'" said Miss Graham.

Before she could ask any question or make any suggestion about the picture, Helen had explained "Friedland."

"That was one of Napoleon's famous battles. Here he defeated the Russians and Prussians."

"Eighteen hundred and seven?" repeated James. "Why, Napoleon was at the very height of his power then, wasn't he?"

"He looks it," said Margaret. "Doesn't he look as if he were the lord of the world? And how those men around him gaze at him with adoration! He certainly had a wonderful ability for making himself beloved by his soldiers!"

Miss Graham had been listening to these comments with the greatest interest.

"What difference do you see between this picture and the 'Horse Fair'?" she asked.

They looked carefully at the picture before them and Ethel Blue scampered back to refresh her memory on the "Horse Fair."

"There isn't any more action in one than the other," said James, "though, of course, it's different."

"But this one makes me think a lot about a great man," added his sister.

"And you want to know what it's all about," exclaimed Ethel Brown.

"You feel as if there must be some story about this one," said Ethel Blue, returning from her expedition to the "Horse Fair."

"That's just the point," said Miss Graham, patting her shoulder. "There's no especial appeal to the imagination in the 'Horse Fair.' You just see horses going to any horse fair in northern France, and there's nothing to tell you that one horse has won a ploughing match and that another is a candidate for a blue ribbon because of his great weight. But here you realize at once that Napoleon was a man to command attention. You want to know what he has

been doing. You feel that there is some good reason for the evident admiration of his soldiers. Those two pictures are examples of two different classes of pictures. The 'Horse Fair' you might call a sketch in a traveller's note book. The Napoleon picture is an illustration in a story."

The young people thought over all this and nodded their agreement.

"Now come with me and see this picture of a pretty girl."

Miss Graham led the way to the Morgan collection and they looked into the winning face of "Miss Farren." She seemed to be moving swiftly across the canvas, her dress and cloak streaming behind her from the speed of her motion.

"She's a pretty girl," said Roger, with his hand on his heart. Tom nodded in agreement, but James shook his head.

"She looks silly," he said sternly.

"There isn't any story to her picture, I'm sure," said Helen. "That's just a portrait."

"But may not a portrait indicate something of the character of the sitter?" asked Miss Graham.

"It ought to," returned Margaret, "and I should think there was something of this girl's character in the portrait, but there's nothing to show that this might be the illustration of a story."

"Unless it were the frontispiece, showing the picture of the heroine," said Roger.

"But the heroine doing nothing that is told about in the story," insisted Helen.

Miss Graham made no comment on these criticisms but led the way to another picture, also of a girl, but this time of a girl in the dress of a peasant and not handsomely arrayed as was Miss Farren.

"There is a bigger difference than clothes between these two," said Della, "but I don't know just what it is. This girl isn't pretty like Miss Farren."

"Do you know who this is?" asked Miss Daisy.

"Somebody who is thinking a lot," said Ethel Brown.

"She is seeing things in her mind," said Ethel Blue.

"Who is the most famous girl in history, who did that?" asked Miss Graham.

"Jeanne d'Arc," said Helen. "She saw visions that inspired her to be a leader of men in the army and she brought about the coronation of her king when he was kept from his throne by the English who held Paris and a large part of France."

"She is seeing visions now," whispered Ethel Blue, clinging to Miss Graham's arm.

Miss Graham gently smoothed the fingers that were tensely closed over the sleeve of her jacket.

"Why do you suppose Helen told us about Jeanne d'Arc just now?" she asked.

"Because Helen just naturally knows all the history there is to be known," said Roger, joking his sister in brotherly fashion.

Helen flushed and murmured something that sounded like, "I thought you'd like to know why she looked like that."

"There is something more than just her character and her disposition in that picture," said Margaret.

"If a single picture can be a story picture, I should think this was a story picture as much as the Napoleon one," said Tom.

Again Miss Daisy nodded her approval.

"I call it a story picture," she said. "Helen felt that it was, immediately, and that is why she told us something of the story of Jeanne d'Arc."

"Most landscapes must be just note book pictures, then," guessed Ethel Brown.

"Unless the landscape should be a background for some story," said Della. "There might be gypsies kidnapping a child, for instance."

"Of course there are other divisions," said Miss Graham, "but roughly speaking, almost every picture is either a record of fact or of imagination, or else it tells a story."

"It's going to be interesting to think about that, when we look at the other pictures we shall see later on," said Tom, and even Roger nodded assent, although his heart was still set upon the armor.

"Now, let's go back for a moment to look at the 'Horse Fair,'" said Miss Graham. "What do you think a picture ought to have in it to be a real picture?" she asked as they went along the gallery.

"It seems to me that a picture that is nothing but a record, as you said a few minutes ago, can't be much of a picture," said Roger. "I should want something more in a picture, something that would

stir me up. Why, even Miss Farren's there isn't exactly a record, because you have something more than just eyes and nose and hair. She looks as if she would be fun to talk to, and as for the 'Horse Fair,' which was the other picture that we decided was a record, why that has in it more than just a lot of horses.

"If Rosa Bonheur had wanted merely to draw some horses, she might have strung them along in a row so that we could get an idea of their size and color and could make a guess at their weight, but here we see them in action and we know that they are in good spirits and we feel some sympathy with the men who have a hard time to hold them."

"Yes, that picture stirs me a little, too."

"That is because both 'Miss Farren' and the 'Horse Fair' are real pictures. Any picture that tries to be more than merely a photographic reproduction must stir your emotions in one way or another," said Miss Daisy. "Now as we look at this picture, do you think the artist put into it everything that she saw on the road that morning when she passed this group of men and horses?"

"I dare say not," said Della, "because there would be likely to be dogs and boys with the men, and perhaps some ugly houses in the background."

"Why do you suppose she didn't put everything in?"

"Why, a picture ought to try to be beautiful, oughtn't it, and some of those things might be ugly,

or there might be so many of them that it would be confusing."

"Those are both good reasons," said Miss Daisy. "They both show that the artist has to *select* the things that he thinks will be of the greatest interest to the people who look at his pictures."

"Now when he has picked them out, what should you say the next step was?"

They were all rather blank at this question but after a while Roger said slowly, "Evidently she picked out just so many as being the best looking ones to put in the picture; and she didn't like them all facing the audience, ready to bob their heads at you as you look at them; she made them trot along the road in a natural way."

"Certainly," approved Miss Graham. "She *arranged* what she had selected so that they would be natural and —"

"And so that the colors would show well?" asked Ethel Brown.

"Yes, so that there would be contrasts of color that would be pleasing to the eye. Then there should be *balance*. Have you any idea what that means?"

Nobody had.

"I wonder if you haven't all noticed a Japanese print that Margaret has?"

"You mean the one with big green leaves up in one corner and the grasshopper clinging to a tendril?" asked Helen.

"That's the one," returned Miss Daisy. "Did

it ever occur to you that those leaves were all crowded off into one corner of the picture?"

"I never thought of it," said Margaret, "and I have looked at it every day for a year. They are, aren't they?"

"But it didn't affect you unpleasantly, did it?"

"Why, no. I think it's a pretty picture," said Ethel Brown.

"It is," agreed Miss Graham; "but what device did the artist use to make you feel comfortable about it, and to make you forget that he had put a bunch of foliage up in one corner and had left more than one-half of his sheet blank?"

Nobody could answer this question and Miss Graham had to give the explanation herself.

"It's all a question of balance," she said. "The great mass of white paper in the lower right hand part of the picture balances the mass of green leaves in the upper left hand corner. The green is a heavier looking color than the white, and it therefore takes a larger amount of white to balance the green. The Japanese who made this painting understood that, and he has so arranged his leaves and his grasshopper, that the eye is entirely pleased by the balance that results. If Rosa Bonheur has managed wisely there should be masses of light and dark, balancing each other, and there should be spaces and solids, balancing each other."

"Has she done it? It doesn't worry me any," said Roger. "I think she must have succeeded."

Keeping Miss Graham's explanation in mind they

took another look at the Napoleon picture and concluded that Meissonier also knew what he was about.

"'Composition' means the putting together of a picture, doesn't it?" asked Helen. "I should think that the composition of a picture that has so many figures, must be extremely difficult."

"Far more difficult, of course, than one for which the artist has selected fewer objects."

"And of two artists producing complicated pictures like these, he is the better who gives an effect of simplicity."

"Suppose that Rosa Bonheur had noticed that one of the men struggling with the horses had his face bound up with a cloth; does that have anything to do with the picture?"

They all agreed that it had not.

"Then she was perfectly right to leave out any object that would distract the observer's mind. She put into this picture of horses going to the horse fair only such things as would make the onlooker think of the beauty and spirit of the horses as shown by their handsome coats and by the difficulty which the men had in controlling them, and his imagination would be stirred to wonder as to which of these fine animals was to win a prize. Everything which might compete with these simple ideas the artist left out of the picture."

"It must have been awfully hard to do such a lot of legs," said Ethel Blue, who knew a little about drawing.

"An artist has to know a good deal about anatomy," returned Miss Graham. "He must know how the human body is made, and the horse's body, too, if he is to do a picture like this, and he even must know something about the under-structure of the earth. He must make the lines of those legs all move harmoniously. Look at this Napoleon picture once more."

Once again they stood before "Friedland."

"If you were to prolong the up-standing lines of weapons and helmets you would find that they were parallel or tended toward some point possibly outside of the picture. Unless an appearance of confusion is desired it would not do to have lines leading in every direction."

"It would make a picture look every which way, wouldn't it?" said Ethel Blue.

"Attention to such points as this helps to give expression to the whole picture," went on Miss Daisy. "Not only do the figures in the pictures have their own expression, but the picture as a whole may wear an expression of peace, like that quiet landscape over there; or of confusion, like this picture of the attempted assassination of a pope, or of orderly excitement, like that cavalry charge yonder."

As they turned from one canvas to another the Club realized the truth of what Miss Graham was saying.

"That is a fact, isn't it?" agreed Tom. "You don't have to see the look on the fellows' faces to

get the general effect of the picture even from a distance."

"We've been talking so much about color schemes in connection with Dorothy's new house, that I am sure the phrase is familiar to you," said Miss Graham. "Look at the color schemes of these pictures around us. Do you see that there are no discords because a color note is struck and all of the other shades and colors harmonize with it? That battle rush, for instance, is a study in red. Compare that with the dull misty blues, greens, and greys in LePage's 'Jeanne d'Arc.'"

They went from one picture to another and proved the truth of this statement to their satisfaction.

"Now we'll call our lesson done," said Miss Graham. "We'll have some luncheon downstairs and when we come up we can let Roger have his heart's desire, and we'll give the afternoon to looking at the Morgan and Altman and Riggs collections of wonders. I doubt if there was ever gathered together anywhere three such groups. The Altman pictures are choice, the Riggs armor is unequalled anywhere in the world, and the Morgan collection is the finest general collection ever owned by a private individual."

It was a weary but a happy party that returned to Rosemont in the late afternoon.

"One of these days is awfully hard on your head," confessed Roger, as he was talking to his mother about the Club's experience, "but it certainly is good for your gray matter."

"We're going to remember whenever we look at pictures again," said Ethel Brown.

"And there are lots of things in it that we shall think about when we look over the decorating in our house," insisted Dorothy.

"What I thought was the nicest of all was the way Miss Graham taught us. It was just like talking. I think she is awfully nice," was Ethel Blue's decision.

CHAPTER XV

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HOUSEWARMING

THE trip to the Metropolitan Museum gave every member of the party a new set of words for her vocabulary. They looked at pictures with opened eyes and talked of their "composition" and "balance." They were all of them more or less interested in photography and now they tried to take photographs that would be real pictures.

"It isn't so easy to make a picture by selecting what you want to have and leaving out the things you don't want," said Roger to Helen one morning as they walked toward Sweetbrier Lodge, "when the things are right there in the landscape and won't get out of the camera's way. A painter would leave out that stupid old wooden house in the field there, but he'd leave in the splendid elm bending over it. Now if I 'shoot' the elm I've got to 'shoot' the house, too."

"The only way out is to take the house at some angle that will show off any good points it may have," declared Helen, wrinkling a puzzled brow.

"Then as likely as not you'll have to take the tree on the side where the lightning hit it and peeled off all its bark," growled her brother gloomily.

"That just shows that a photographer has to be

more skilful than a painter," she said. "The painter can do what he likes, but the photographer has to get good results out of what is set before him."

"And as for balance — if nature happens to have placed things in balance, well and good; but if she didn't what can you do about it?"

"Nothing, my child, unless you introduce some object that you have some power over. Put in a girl or a dog or a horse somewhere where their weight will bring about the result you want."

"You can't carry girls and dogs and horses round with you," objected Roger, who was in a depressed mood this morning and found difficulties in every suggestion.

"You've got enough sisters and cousins for the girls, and you can take Christopher Columbus around with you in your pocket to play the four-footed friend," laughed Helen.

"Speaking of Columbus — are we going to celebrate Columbus Day this year?" asked Roger, as he deftly inserted a new spool of film. "It's just luck James and I being here at all, you know. We'd like to do something to celebrate being exposed to scarlet fever as soon as we got to Boston, and being sent home for it to incubate, and then having nothing hatch!"

"Haven't you heard? Aunt Louise is going to have her housewarming on October 12, Columbus Day? She has asked the Club to do something appropriate."

"I thought the Watkinses had asked us to go into New York to see the parade."

"They have. That won't interfere with us. They'll come out here later and then we'll do something in the evening in the new attic to amuse Aunt Louise's guests.

"Any idea what?"

"I've got an idea in the back of my head. I'll have to talk it over first with the girls to see if we can manage the costumes. If we can I think it will be mighty pretty."

Roger nodded absent-mindedly. He had perfect confidence in his sister's good judgment and he was willing to do his part for his aunt's sake as well as for the good name of the Club.

"What are you taking?" Helen asked him after they had roamed about the new place for a time. "You seem to be using a lot of film."

"I am. I thought I'd take the new house and garden from every point of view I could, inside and out, and make two or three portfolios of them and send them to Father and Uncle Richard, as they'd probably like to have them."

"What a perfectly darling idea! Isn't Aunt Louise delighted?"

"She seems to be," returned Roger.

"You knew she had asked Uncle Richard to come up for her house-warming?"

"Father, too; but it's dollars to doughnuts they won't be able to come, so I thought I'd do these any way."

"Father won't be able to, but Uncle Richard may."

"He'll be glad to have the prints even if he has seen the original places."

"Perhaps he'll like them better on that account."

"I think I should. It would be like having your memory illustrated."

"Are you going to do the rockery in the garden?"

"If the frost has left anything."

"It must be placed in just the right spot for there's a lot of it left. I passed it early to-day and it looked almost as pretty as if it were summer."

"Dorothy certainly made a success of that."

"It was an afterthought, too."

"I believe the chief reason it has been so lovely is that it was placed in a natural position. The rocks look as if they ought to be just where they are."

"Mrs. Schermerhorn's rockery looks as if she had said, 'Lo, I'll have a rockery,' and then she stuck it right in the middle of her lawn where no collection of rocks has been for twenty years."

"And she has hot-house ferns in it!"

The brother and sister laughed delightedly at their neighbor's ideas of natural beauty.

"Perhaps it was fortunate that Dorothy didn't have a hot-house to draw on," said Roger, moving from one side to another of his cousin's rockery in order to get the best view of its remaining loveliness.

"Dorothy has too much sense. In the first place she snuggled hers in here under the trees, just the way the rocks are naturally over in FitzJames's Woods. Then she brought over here exactly the plants she found there."

"It had to look as if it were a bit of the woods, didn't it?"

"Do you want me to be in this picture?"

"You look too dressed up."

"Thank you! This is a middy I've worn all summer, and I'm just wearing out the rags of it on Saturdays."

"Nevertheless, you dazzle me."

"That's a polite way of saying you don't want me in the foreground. You'd better put in what Miss Daisy calls 'contemporaneous human interest.' I'm a great addition to any picture in which I appear."

"You are, ma'am, of course," replied Roger with exaggerated politeness, "but I think I'd like you under an arbor in a graceful attitude and not hobnobbing with these wild flowers."

"You forget that wild flowers have been my special care this summer," returned Helen, withdrawing to a point where she would not interfere with Roger's plans. "Dorothy's wild garden is only a copy of mine."

"Not in arrangement. Hers is prettier with everything piled up on the stones this way — columbines, ferns, wild ginger, hepaticas."

"You're right about that. Mine had to be in a

regular bed. Are you going to take a picture of the vegetable garden?"

"Certainly I am. And of tomatoes that were started with and without dirt bands."

Roger's chief attention during the summer garden campaign had been devoted to the raising of vegetables, while the girls had done wonders with flowers.

"What are dirt bands?" inquired Helen.

"I know," cried the voice of Ethel Brown who came in sight through the pergola. "They're brown paper cuffs to put around young plants. It keeps the earth all close and cozy and warm and they grow faster than the ones that don't wear such fine clothes."

"Listen to that," Roger said approvingly to Helen. "Those Ethels haven't let anything slip that happened in any of our gardens all summer. They know all about everything!"

"Roger is in a very complimentary mood this morning," laughed Helen. "If I could only think of something to say I'd be polite in return."

"I'm sorry it doesn't come to you spontaneously," replied her brother, "but what care I?" and he broke into song:

"I'm a careless potato, and care not a pin
How into existence I came;
If they planted me drill-wise or dibbled me in,
To me 'tis exactly the same.

The bean and the pea may more loftily tower,
But I care not a button for them.
Defiance I nod with my beautiful flower
When the earth is hoed up to my stem."

"Oo-hoo!" came a voice from the Lodge. "Come in and help."

"There's Dorothy calling," cried Ethel Brown, and they all moved toward the house where they found their cousin on the back porch with an array of plates, bowls, stones, small plants, tiny trees and small china figures before her.

"May I inquire, madam, what on earth —" began Roger, but Ethel Brown's exclamation enlightened him.

"You're making Japanese gardens!"

"I'm going to try to. I think they're awfully pretty and cunning. Let's each make one."

Mrs. Smith had bought a professionally made garden at an Oriental shop in New York, and the girls were seized with a desire to copy it.

"Here's the real thing," and Dorothy indicated a flat bowl of gray and dull green pottery. In it were some stones outlining the bed of a stream over which stretched the span of a tiny porcelain bridge. A twisted tree that looked aged in spite of its height of only three inches reared its evergreen head at one end of the bridge; a patch of grass the size of three fingers grew greenly at the other end, and a goldfish swam happily in a pool at the side.

"Margaret told me that horse-radish would grow

if you kept it damp and let it sprout, so I've got several pieces started for our gardens."

Sure enough, the horse-radish had sent forth shoots and a head of small leaves quite tall enough for the size of the garden, and its body looked brownish and gnarled like some bit of queer Oriental wood. Dorothy had taken up little plants of running growth like partridge berry and she had collected many wee ferns.

"We can sprinkle a pinch or two of grass seed and bird seed over them all when they're done," she said. "That ought to bring up something fresh every little while."

"These will be all started for your housewarming," suggested Helen.

"That's why I'm doing them. We can leave them here, and I'll come over every day so they'll be watered. I think they'll be awfully pretty and they'll be different from the usual decorations."

"I read somewhere the other day that the Japs arrange their flowers with a meaning."

"O, they do," cried Dorothy. "They have very little in one holder, perhaps only three flowers. One — the highest one — means Heaven, the next lower is Man, and the lowest is Earth."

"I should have to have a diagram with every vase," insisted Roger.

"The water in the bowl that holds the flowers represents the surface of the earth and the edge of the bowl is the horizon. Then they have ways of suggesting the different seasons — spring by flowers,

summer by a lot of green leaves, autumn by bright colored leaves and winter by tall stems without much on them."

"We've got flowers left in the gardens — lots of them," insisted Ethel Brown proudly.

"Plenty," answered Dorothy; "and by this time next year I hope we'll have a little hot-house of our own so that we can have flowering plants all winter, but I like other things, too."

"Miss Daisy was telling me the other day that we Americans didn't pay enough attention to using through the winter branches of trees and seedling trees from the woods and boughs of pine and fir and cedar," said Ethel Blue, who came through the house and had been listening to the conversation.

"I don't see why you couldn't have a small maple-tree growing all winter in the dining-room if you put your mind on it," answered Helen.

"A great jar of Norway spruce with cones hanging from the fingers would be stunning," decided Roger, as he set his horse-radish in place and planted a tree at one end of it.

"The covers for the radiators are all on now," said Dorothy, changing the subject. "Did you notice them when you came through the house?"

The Ethels had not and Helen and Roger had gone directly to the garden, so they all went in on a tour of examination.

"Mother said that there was one thing about heating that she couldn't stand, and that was the ugly radiators; so the heating man has tried to hide them

as much as he could. There isn't one in the house that stands out like a monument of pipes," declared Dorothy.

"Even in the attic?"

"Not even in the attic. See, he's covered most of them with grilles bronzed or painted like the woodwork of the room, so they aren't at all conspicuous."

"It's these little points that make this house so attractive," declared Helen. "Aunt Louise has thought of everything."

"What are you going to wear at the party?" asked Ethel Blue of Dorothy.

"If we do that Columbus thing —" began Dorothy, looking at Helen.

"Go on," the president of the U. S. C. replied to the inquiring gaze; "we might as well tell Roger now as later."

"If we have the tableaux and pantomimes we can stay in our court dresses."

"Court dresses?" inquired Roger, sitting up interestedly. "Why so scrumptious?"

"Columbus at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella," answered Helen.

"You as Columbus."

"Me? Me? Why this honor?" asked Roger meekly.

"Need you ask?" returned Helen. "That's in reply to your remarks about me as an addition to the foreground of your photographs."

"Even. I don't care what I do as long as I have time to get it up."

"You shall have plenty of time," promised Dorothy. "What I'm more interested in just now is what we're to have to eat on the festive night."

"Is Aunt Louise going to let us decide?"

"Subject to her veto, I suspect," smiled Helen.

Dorothy nodded.

"She says she wants something different from ice-cream and cake and chicken salad."

They all laughed, for Rosemont was noted for invariably having these three excellent but monotonous viands at all her teas and receptions and church entertainments.

"I move we have cold turkey," said Roger.

"It's rather early for turks, but we can have capon if we can't find a good turkey," replied Ethel Brown, who kept the run of the Rosemont market.

"Let's have little birds in aspic jelly," suggested Dorothy.

They all gurgled with pleasure at this idea.

"Squabs," went on Dorothy as her imagination began to work.

"Um," commented Roger, his eyes shut.

"Split them down the back, dip them into beaten egg and melted butter, sprinkle them with the finest bread crumbs and broil them."

"O," came a gentle murmur from Roger, who was deeply affected by the recital of this appetizing dish. "Where's the aspic?"

"You cut each squab in halves and put one-half in a mold and then you pour on the aspic."

"Dorothy, you talk as if you'd been doing birds in aspic all your life. Did you ever cook them?"

"Once," dimpled Dorothy. "At cooking school."

"I know how to make aspic," declared Ethel Brown proudly.

"Let's have it."

"Soak a quarter of an ounce of vegetable gelatine in a pint of water for two hours; then add the strained juice of a lemon, pepper and salt and cayenne, two tablespoonfuls of Tarragon vinegar and another pint of water. Let it cook for a few minutes over a slow fire and then boil it for two or three minutes and strain it through a jelly bag over your birdies."

"O, you can't do that that way," cried Ethel Blue. "Their elbows will show through when they're turned out of their molds. You have to put in a layer of jelly and when it is stiffened a little put in your bird, and then pour the rest of the jelly over it."

"Correct," approved Dorothy. "We must be sure to have enough for each person to have a half bird in a mold. They are turned out at the last minute and a sprig of parsley is laid on top of each one."

"Help! Help!" came a faint cry from Roger. "I am swooning with joy at the sound of this delicious food. I'm so glad Aunt Louise is giving this

party and not one of the chicken salad ladies of Rosemont."

"Aspic is good to know about for hot weather use," said Ethel Blue. "I've been meaning all summer to tell Della how to make it — she feels the heat so awfully."

"You can put all sorts of meats in it, I suppose."

"And vegetables; peas and beets and carrots very tender and cut very fine. Tomato jelly makes a good salad, too."

"You could make pretty little individual molds of that."

"What are we going to have for salad after these birds?" inquired Roger.

"Let's have alligator pear salad. It's as easy as fiddle. You just have to pare the alligators and take out their cores —"

"With a butcher's knife?" inquired Roger.

"— and cut them in halves lengthwise. Then you put the pieces on a pale yellow-green lettuce leaf and pour French dressing over it, and there you are!"

"I like it all except the name," objected Roger.

"Christen it something else, and be happy," urged Helen.

"What for sweeties?" Roger demanded. "I'm going through this feast systematically."

"Don't go on to the sweeties until we've settled on the bread, then," insisted Ethel Brown, "I say Parker House rolls."

"Or pocket book rolls — the same thing, only smaller," said Ethel Blue.

"I haven't made any since we were at Chautauqua; I shall have to look them up again," confessed Dorothy.

"I remember," said Ethel Brown. "You scald two cups of milk and then put into it three tablespoonfuls of butter, two teaspoonfuls of sugar and a teaspoonful and a half of salt. When it has cooled off a little add a dissolved yeast cake and three cups of flour and beat it like everything."

"Command me on the day of the party," offered Roger politely.

"We will," giggled the girls, and they said it so earnestly that Roger gazed at them suspiciously.

"Cover it up and let it rise; then cut it through and through and knead in two and a half cups more flour. Let it rise again. Put it on a floured board, knead it, and roll it out to half an inch in thickness. Then cut out the rolls with a floured biscuit cutter. Brush one-half of each roll with melted butter and fold the round in halves."

"Won't they slide open?"

"Not if you pinch the edges together. Arrange them in your pan and cover them over so they can rise in comfort. Then bake them in a hot oven for from twelve to fifteen minutes," ended Ethel Brown.

"They aren't as easy as Della's lightning biscuits, but they're so good when they're done that you don't mind having taken the trouble about them."

"Now for the sweeties," insisted Roger. "I'm

afraid you'll forget them and my tooth is as sweet as ever it was."

"Are frozen things absolutely forbidden?" inquired Dorothy.

"O, no, let's have one frozen thing. We're going to have some of the Rosemont people who aren't relatives, you know, and I hate to think of what they'd say about Aunt Louise if she didn't give them something frozen!" laughed Helen.

"Let's have frozen peaches, then. Make them in the proportion of two quarts of peaches to two cups of sugar, a quart of water, and the juice of a lemon and a half. You peel the peaches and take out the stones and rub the fruit through a colander. Put the peach pulp and the lemon juice into a syrup made by boiling the sugar and water together for five minutes and letting it cool. Pour it all into the freezer and grind it until it is firm."

"Command me," murmured Roger again.

"Poor old Roger! You shan't be worked to death! Patrick will do the grinding."

"For small mercies I'm thankful," returned Roger, a beaming smile breaking over his face.

"I speak for chopped preserved ginger with whipped cream, served in those lovely ramequins of Aunt Louise's," cried Ethel Blue.

"Why can't we have maple marguerites to go with everything?"

"New to me, but let's have 'em," urged Roger.

"Boil together a cup and a half of brown sugar and a half a cup of water until it makes a soft ball

when it's dropped into cold water. Let it cool for a few minutes and then put in half a teaspoonful of maple flavoring and beat it all together. Have ready a quarter of a cup of finely chopped nut meats. Add half of this amount and drop this perfectly *dee*-licious stuff on to crackers. While it's still warm enough to be sticky sprinkle over the crackers the remainder of the nut meats."

"I'll grind the nut meats," offered Roger.

"And ask for heavy pay in marguerites!" laughed Ethel Brown.

"I scorn your aspersions of my character," returned her brother solemnly. "What are you going to have to drink?"

"Coffee — grape-juice lemonade — the usual things."

"I think that's a pretty good list. Write it down and let's see what Aunt Louise thinks of it," recommended Helen.

CHAPTER XVI

COLUMBUS DAY

ETHEL BLUE, as Columbus Day approached, was filled with many strange feelings, some of them far from pleasant. When she read a letter from her father a few days before the twelfth she felt as if dread had brought upon her exactly what she had dreaded. The letter was filled with loving expressions but it told her that her father was to be married very soon.

"I know that you will love the dear lady who has honored me by saying that she will relieve my loneliness," he wrote.

"*I* would have relieved his loneliness if he had given me a chance," Ethel sobbed to herself as she lay on her bed and read the tear-blotted lines for the tenth time.

"It will be a sorrow to you to leave Aunt Marion and your cousins, but perhaps the thought that now you will belong in a home of your own will make up for it, in part, at any rate. I don't see how we can all help being happy together, and we must all try to make each other happy."

Ethel Blue thought of a great many things to say in reply to her father. They sounded very smart

and very convincing as she said them over to herself in a whisper, but just as she was wiping her eyes and getting up to sit at her desk and put them on paper her Aunt Marion's suggestion that she would be selfish if she did anything that would hurt her father or prevent him from making a belated happiness for himself cut her to the heart.

"He doesn't love me or he wouldn't do it," she repeated, and then she remembered that all her life she had had a home and a loving family of cousins who were as good as brothers and sisters, while her father had spent the same time without the thought, even, of home-making.

"I suppose it's some old Fort Myer woman who's as cross as two sticks," she murmured again and again; and then an inner voice seemed to speak in her ear and tell her that there was no reason why she should not imagine that it was some really lovely person who was as sweet as she was pretty.

"Everybody says my mother was pretty," thought poor Ethel Blue, who had been making herself very miserable by her old habit of "pretending" without any basis of fact, and who now was trying to get a scrap of comfort from the thought that her father had had good taste once and might be trusted to exercise it again.

Whether or not to show the letter to her Aunt Marion she did not know. Her father had not said whether he had informed her or not. Usually Ethel told her aunt everything promptly, but now she did not feel as if she could speak of the thing that had

appeared dreadful when it was only a possibility. The reality was so much worse that it did not seem as if she could trust herself to mention it.

"Aunt Louise has asked him to come on to the housewarming," she said. "I'll wait and see if he comes. Then he can tell her and Aunt Marion himself; and if he doesn't come it won't be any worse for me to tell them a few days from now than right off this minute."

It was so forlorn an Ethel Blue who dragged herself through the preparations for the Columbus Day entertainment, that Ethel Brown could not help noticing the melancholy air that hung over her usually smiling face. Ethel Blue would make no explanation to her cousin, nor would she tell her aunt anything more than the reassuring words that she was perfectly well. They gave up trying to make her talk about herself, trusting to time to bring its own healing.

No letter came from her father announcing his acceptance of his sister Louise's invitation, nor did another letter reach Ethel Blue. She was inclined to make a grievance of this until it occurred to her that she was not likely to hear until she replied to her father's announcement of his proposed marriage.

"It's a serious thing and I ought to answer his letter right off," her conscience told her, "but I can't say I'm glad and I don't want to say I'm not glad. I'll wait until after the twelfth, any way."

Her feelings of selfishness and uncertainty made her a miserable girl during the interval.

On the morning of Columbus Day the Mortons and Hancocks went into New York to the Watkinses. Della's and Tom's father was a clergyman who worked among the foreigners of the East Side. This was an advantage to the Club members when they watched the procession that wound its way from the lower part of the city northward to Columbus Circle at 59th Street.

"These people must come from all over Europe," exclaimed Ethel Brown as bits of conversation in languages that she never had heard drifted to her ears.

"New York is called one of the largest foreign cities in the world," laughed Roger, whose spirits had risen although he was having difficulties again with his camera and its persistent desire to take everything that came within its range, "whether the girls are pretty or not!" he complained.

"They say that New York is the second largest German city in the world, and that there are more Hebrews of different nationalities gathered here than anywhere else," said Tom.

"Here are a lot of people wearing peasant costumes that I never saw in any geography," cried Dorothy.

"When otherwise not accounted for you can generally put them among the Balkan states," laughed Della.

"Look at that girl over there in peasant costume and right side of her is a girl in the latest New York style! That's a tremendous contrast."

"I suppose the American-dressed girl thinks she

is very fashionable, but the other looks much more sensibly dressed and more attractive, too," said James gravely.

"She's a great deal prettier girl for one reason," smiled his sister. "She would look better whatever she wore."

They all laughed at James who insisted that he preferred peasant dress, but they all exclaimed with delight at the gorgeous costumes worn by a group of Hungarian men. Some of them were riding in carriages and they seemed very self-conscious but greatly pleased at the attention they attracted.

"This is a great day for the Italians," said Helen as band after band, and society after society, bearing the Italian red, white and green passed them.

"Well, Columbus was an Italian. They ought to feel comfortable about it. He discovered us."

They all shouted at James's way of putting his defense of Columbus's countrymen.

"If we're going to hear any of the speeches at Columbus Circle we'd better hop into the subway and speed to 59th Street," urged Tom.

They were in plenty of time, and watched the placing around the Columbus monument of numberless wreaths and emblems which the societies brought with them, chiefly at the ends of tall poles and deposited at the feet of the statue of the great explorer.

As soon as they reached home the Mortons all went over to Sweetbrier Lodge to help with the final decorations. The attic they had set in order the day before. This was necessary for they had to have a

curtain and they wanted to put it through a rehearsal as well as themselves. Extra chairs had been brought in for the occasion and they were now unfolded so that the little audience room was ready for its opening performance.

Below stairs all was ready in the kitchen department, the Ethels learned when they offered their services there. What was not completed was the arrangement of flowers and branches throughout the rooms. At the end of an hour during which the Ethels and Dorothy and Helen arranged and Roger carried, the house looked really lovely.

The color scheme of the lower floor was so autumnal that it was not hard to follow it out in leaves and blossoms. Chrysanthemums were ready to emphasize the yellow tones, and bronze leaves from oaks and chestnuts carried on the darker hues. Here and there one of Dorothy's Japanese gardens gave an air of quaintness to a corner, or stood in relief against a screen.

Upstairs the nursery was a bower of white cosmos; Dorothy's room was feathery with pink blossoms of the same delicate flower; against Mrs. Smith's primrose walls trailed the yellow leaves of a grapevine; purple asters nodded in the violet chamber, and the gray guest room wore fluffs of clematis.

It was not a large party that gathered at Mrs. Smith's for the housewarming. The family connection was not small, however, and the newcomers had made some warm friends during the year that they had lived in Rosemont. The older Watkinses and

Hancocks had come, and about fifty people filled the drawing room comfortably, admiring its beauty as they waited for the signal to go upstairs to the attic to see one of the entertainments which Rosemonters had learned to expect from the United Service Club.

"It's very charming," murmured Mrs. Hancock to her sister. "I see your hand here."

"Not very much," demurred Miss Graham. "I merely made an occasional suggestion or told them how to work out some good idea of their own. The color scheme is Mrs. Smith's."

"It is charming," repeated Mrs. Hancock, her eyes moving from the yellow-white woodwork to the natural pongee walls and then on to the next shade of yellow, found in the draperies of the windows, made of a heavy linen dyed to strike the next note in the color scale. The furniture was upholstered in three or four shades of brown; a bit of gold flashed sombrely from the shadows, and an occasional touch of dull blue brought out the blue tones of the handsome rugs.

Every one took a peek into the upper rooms as they passed upstairs to the attic. Ayleesabet's nursery received much praise, and the delicate tones of the bedrooms won immediate approval. In the attic they found comfortable wicker chairs arranged about the room facing a small stage before which hung a tan linen curtain.

"What are the children going to do?" asked Mr. Emerson of his hostess.

"I really don't know," returned Mrs. Smith.

"Dorothy said it would be appropriate for Columbus Day, so I entrusted it all to the young people."

When the curtain was drawn the Club was disclosed grouped on the stage. They sang Miss Bates's "America the Beautiful," Mrs. Smith accompanying them on the piano.

"That's all I have to do with the program," she said to Mr. Emerson when it was over and she had again taken her seat beside him.

Then Tom told the story of Columbus — how he was born at Genoa and became a sailor and when he was about thirty-four years old went with a brother to live in Lisbon. Tom was seated on the stage at a table and two or three of the others sat about as if they were in a library listening to the talk. They entered quite naturally into the conversation.

"Four years later," continued Tom, "somebody gave Columbus a map that put the Orient directly west of Spain, and Columbus became filled with a desire to search out the East by sailing west."

"I've read that he died thinking he had discovered the East," responded Helen.

"He laid his plans before the Portuguese king, but he found he couldn't trust him, so he went to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in Spain. They summoned their wisest men to pass on the subject at a council held at Salamanca. For three years they kept him waiting about in uncertainty before they reported to the king that his idea was absurd. Columbus was furious —"

" I should think he might have been."

"— and he started at once for Paris to try to get the king of France, Charles VIII, to help him. He took his little son with him and one night they slept at a monastery. The prior became interested in Columbus's story and believed in him and didn't want the glory of his achievement to go to another country. So he managed to secure for him another interview with Ferdinand and Isabella, and we're going to see now," said Tom, turning to the audience, " what happened at the convent."

With that the curtain fell. When it parted once more a dark curtain across the stage represented the outside of the convent. Ethel Brown recited Trowbridge's " Columbus at the Convent," while James acted the part of the Prior; Roger, Columbus; and Dicky, little Diego.

" Those children have a real feeling for costume," whispered Miss Graham to her neighbor, and then started as she found that it was not her brother-in-law, Dr. Hancock, as she supposed, but Ethel Blue's father, Captain Morton, who had come in in the darkness.

" How do you do? " he said, smiling at her startled air. " I suppose they made these things themselves."

" The boys are wearing their sisters' long stockings and the girls made the short, puffy trunks and short, full coats."

Ethel Brown's voice sounded clearly through the darkness though her hearers could not see her.

"Dreary and brown the night comes down,
Gloomy without a star.
On Palos town the night comes down;
The day departs with a stormy frown;
The sad sea moans afar.

"A convent-gate is near; 'tis late;
Ting-ling! the bell they ring.
They ring the bell, they ask for bread —
'Just for my child,' the father said.
Kind hands the bread will bring.

"White was his hair, his mien was fair,
His look was calm and great.
The porter ran and called a friar;
The friar made haste and told the prior;
The prior came to the gate.

Here the dark curtain was drawn and a room was disclosed with a table at which the men sat and a small bed in which Dicky was put to sleep.

"He took them in, he gave them food;
The traveller's dreams he heard;
And fast the midnight moments flew,
And fast the good man's wonder grew,
And all his heart was stirred.

"The child the while, with soft, sweet smile,
Forgetful of all sorrow,
Lay soundly sleeping in his bed.
The good man kissed him then and said:
'You leave us not to-morrow!'

"'I pray you rest the convent's guest;
The child shall be our own —
A precious care, while you prepare
Your business with the court, and bear
Your message to the throne.'

"And so his guest he comforted.
O, wise, good prior, to you,
Who cheered the stranger's darkest days,
And helped him on his way, what praise
And gratitude are due!"

The pantomime followed the lines closely.

"Wasn't Dicky cunning!" exclaimed Dicky's adoring grandmother.

"Dicky was a duck!" exclaimed Helen, who had slipped out to see the pantomime. "We told him what he was supposed to be — a little boy travelling with his father, and that they had to stop and ask for food and that a kind man took them in and gave him a comfy bed. He seemed to understand it all, and he took hold of James's hand and looked up in his face as seriously as if he were the real thing. He was splendid."

"All the same I'm always relieved when Dicky's part is over and he hasn't done anything awful!" confessed Dorothy, who had come out also. "It would be just like him to say to James, 'You needn't give me any bread; I want cookieth!'"

"We tried to impress on him that he wasn't to say anything — that nobody but Ethel Brown was to say anything; that was the game. I dare say if James

had spoken Dicky would have ordered his meal to suit his fancy."

Tom went on with Columbus's story at this point, but he spoke from the floor because tableaux were being arranged behind the curtains. He told how the interview with the king and queen that the prior had arranged, all went wrong and how Columbus started again for France but was called back by the queen whose imagination had been excited by what he told her, and who promised to pledge her jewels to raise money for his expedition.

Here the curtains swung open and showed a brilliant scene, Della representing the queen, James the king, and all the other Club members, courtiers. Columbus was arguing his case before the court and he was shown in the act of knocking off the end of an egg to convince the men who had said that they would believe the world was round when they saw the impossible happen — when an egg should stand upright.

"I hope Roger's hand won't slip," murmured Roger's mother; "that's a real egg!"

It was while she was standing beside the queen as one of her ladies in waiting that Ethel Blue's eyes happened to fall on her father out in the audience. The light from the stage illuminated his face and she thought that she never had seen him so happy as he looked at that moment.

"He's so dear and he's going away from me," she groaned inwardly. "Now if it were only dear Miss Daisy he's going to marry," she wished with all her

heart as she noticed that Miss Graham sat in the next chair; "but it isn't; it's some old Fort Myer woman."

The curtain fell on her misery and Tom again took up his tale. He told about the three tiny ships that Columbus managed to secure, and their setting sail and how frightened the sailors became when day after day passed and they saw no chance of ever reaching new land or ever returning home, and how they threatened to mutiny if he did not turn back.

Then came another pantomime with Roger as Columbus and James as the mate of the *Santa Maria,* while Ethel Brown recited Joaquin Miller's poem:

COLUMBUS

"Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: 'Now must we pray,
For lo, the very stars are gone.
Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?'
'Why, say, "Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"'My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak.'
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
'What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?'
'Why, you shall say at break of day,
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
'Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say'—
He said: 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'

"They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
'This mad sea shows his teeth to-night.
He lifts his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth as if to bite;
Brave Admiral, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?'
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'

"Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
A light! a light! a light! a light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: 'On! sail on!'"

The last picture was Columbus gazing joyfully at the land he had discovered through his perseverance. It was supposed to be the early morning of October 12, 1492, and Roger, surrounded by his sailors, stood with a foot on the rail of his boat, shielding his eyes from the rising sun, while the others crowded behind him, whispering with delight.

When the curtains fell together for the last time the lights flashed out upon the audience and disclosed Captain Morton greeting his sister and sister-in-law and his nieces and nephews.

"Where's my girl?" he inquired in his cordial, hearty voice. "Where's Ethel Blue?"

Some one gave her a friendly push forward so her father did not notice the reluctance with which she had been almost creeping toward him. He threw his arm around her shoulders regardless of possible damage to the elegancies of her court costume, and kissed her heartily. The tears shone in her eyes as she forced herself to meet his searching gaze.

"Not crying!" he whispered in her ear, and she felt her heart give a real pang as the happiness left his face and was replaced by his old look of sorrow and endurance. "Not crying!" he repeated in her ear. "Why, I thought you loved her! You've done nothing but write to me about Miss Daisy all summer!"

"About Miss Daisy? Do you mean —? Is it Miss Daisy?"

"It certainly is Miss Daisy. Here, come behind the curtain," and he swept his daughter and his *fiancée* out of sight of the retiring audience. "It is Daisy Graham who is to be your dear mother, my little Ethel Blue. Are you satisfied now?"

"O, Father! O, Miss Daisy!" cried Ethel Blue, sobbing now from relief and joy and clinging to both of them; "I never guessed it! It's too wonderful to be true!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE PARTING BREAKFAST

ETHEL BLUE'S change of mind about stepmothers was so complete that her cousins would have joked her about it except that her Aunt Marion advised them to say nothing to her on a subject that had once been so sore a theme.

"Don't recall those painful thoughts," she advised. "Ethel Blue will be happier and certainly Miss Daisy will be if the present mood continues."

"I thought you couldn't help loving her when you knew her," Captain Morton had said to Ethel Blue. "That's why I was willing to postpone the wedding all summer so that you and she might have a chance to become really well acquainted."

"It was a good way," answered Ethel frankly. "If I had known about it I should have thought everything Miss Daisy did was done for its effect on me. I should have been suspicious of her all the time."

"You have come to know a very dear woman in a natural way and it crowns my happiness that you should care so much for each other."

Since he had waited so patiently for so many months Captain Morton begged that the wedding should take place at once. Mrs. Hancock urged her sister to have it in Glen Point.

"If you go to Washington you'll have many acquaintances there but not any more loving friends than you've made here and in Rosemont," she said cordially. "It will give the Doctor and me the greatest happiness to have you married from our house, and it will be such a delight to all the U. S. C. if they know that they can all be at the wedding of their dear 'Miss Daisy.'"

"It will be easier for all the Rosemont people — and it would be very sweet to go to Richard from your house," murmured Daisy thoughtfully. "I believe I'll do it."

"It will be easier to bring Aunt Mary on here than for all the New Jersey clans to go to Washington," insisted Mrs. Hancock, referring to the aunt with whom her sister had lived in Washington.

"I'll do it," decided Daisy. "Richard's furlough is almost over so it will have to be very soon," she continued. "I'll have to begin my preparations at once."

So all the plans were made for a quiet wedding for just the two families and their intimate friends. It was to be ten days after the housewarming. The ceremony was to be in the church at Glen Point, with Ethel Blue as maid of honor, and Margaret and Helen, Ethel Brown and Della as the bridesmaids.

Even this very first decision gave the Ethels a twinge of pain, because it prophesied their coming separation. Never before had they been separated at any such function, yet now Ethel Blue was to be in one position and her twin cousin in another. They

both sighed when it was talked over, and they glanced at each other a trifle sadly. They did not need to put the meaning of their glances into words.

Dr. Hancock was to give the bride away. To everybody's regret Lieutenant Morton could not be present to act as his brother's best man.

"I'm more sorry than I can tell you, old fellow," he wrote. "Roger will have to take my place and give you all my good wishes with his own. You may congratulate me, too, for I've just got word that my step has come. I can now sign myself,

"Your affectionate brother,

"ROGER MORTON,

"Capt. U. S. N."

There was great rejoicing in the Morton family when they learned this news, and telegrams poured in on them all day long after the announcement was publicly made.

"It gives one more touch of happiness," smiled Richard Morton, who went about beaming. He had to content himself with the companionship of his daughter, for his betrothed was too busy to give him much time. Probably this was a good thing, for it made her father's visit much as it always had been to Ethel Blue, and did not impress on her too abruptly the idea of their new relation.

It was at the meeting of the U. S. C. held very soon after the housewarming that the members decided to give a breakfast in celebration of the wedding and of Ethel Blue's departure from Rosemont.

"We'll call it a breakfast, but we'll have it rather late," said Helen.

"Why?" growled Roger hungrily. "I like my morning nourishment early."

"It's going to be out on our terrace, and it's getting to be late in the season and if it's too cold we can't have it there," said Dorothy.

"Put in your glass windows and have it at a civilized hour," implored Roger.

Dorothy looked at Helen.

"I'll ask Mother if she won't do that," she said. "Then we can have a fire in the open fireplace out there if it should be really frosty. I forgot we had all those comforts!"

"We must give the Glen Point people time to get over, if Roger can restrain his appetite a trifle," urged Ethel Brown.

"We'd better have Della and Tom stay all night so they'll be here on time," urged Ethel Blue. "I can't get over New Haven being near enough for Tom to go back and forth so easily. I always thought it was as far off as Boston."

"I declare I almost weep every time I think of Ethel Blue's leaving the club," sobbed Tom with loud groans.

Ethel Blue tossed a pillow at him.

"Stop making fun of me," she said with her pretended severity.

"Ethel Blue was the founder of this club. Don't forget that," said James gravely.

"Don't be so solemn, people; you'll make me

bawl," and Ethel Blue looked around her wildly, as Ethel Brown made a dive into her pocket for her handkerchief, and Della sniffed.

"Stop your nonsense, children," urged Helen. "Let's make a list of what we are going to do at our breakfast. First, what shall we eat?"

The discussion waxed absorbing, but when it came to the arrangement of a program it was found that there seemed to be fewer ideas than was customary among them.

"What's the matter?" asked Helen. "Usually we're tumbling over ourselves suggesting things."

"I've got an idea, but it's sort of a joke and I don't want to take the edge off it by telling it now," admitted James.

It proved that all of them were in the same predicament.

"I'll tell you — let's have Helen and Roger the committee to arrange this program," suggested Tom. "Then we can each one tell the committee what our particular idea is, and they'll be the only ones who will know all the jokes."

They decided that this would be the best way, and the committee withdrew to a corner where it was visited by one after the other of the rest of the members, while the unoccupied people drew around the piano on which Ethel Blue was playing popular songs.

"When do you go?" Tom asked her as she stopped for a few minutes to hunt up a new piece of music.

"The wedding is the day after our breakfast; then they go off on a week's trip and when they come back they'll pick me up here and take me on to Fort Myer with them."

"That means that you'll only be here about ten days longer?"

Ethel Blue nodded, her eyes filling.

"I wish you'd give us your idea now, Tom," called Helen, seeing from across the room that her little cousin was not far from tears, and Tom went away, leaving her to let her fingers slip softly through a simple tune that her Aunt Marion had taught her to play in the dusk without her notes. She wondered if she would ever do it again; if her new mother and her father would want her to play it to them; if she should be happy, the only young person in the household when she had been accustomed to a large family; if she could ever get along without Dicky to tease her and to be teased.

"Aunt Marion says that every change in life has its good points and its bad ones," she thought. "I must make the most out of the good points and try not to notice the bad ones or to change them into good ones."

The tune rang out with a gayer lilt.

"Any way, there are so many good points now that I ought not to think about the others. I've all my life wanted to live with Father. Here's my chance, and I must see only that my wish has come true."

"You sound very gay over here by yourself," said

James's voice behind her. "You don't sound as if you were sorry at all about leaving us."

"I'm trying to balance things," Ethel Blue answered. "I lose Ethel Brown and all of you, but I gain Father."

"You'll be coming north for your holidays next summer, I suppose. That will be a great old time for the U. S. C.," he said hopefully.

"It would be simply too fine for words if the U. S. C. could go to Washington for Washington's Birthday next winter the way it did this winter," returned Ethel Blue, beaming at him.

"There certainly is every inducement to get up an excursion there now," said James. "You know we've decided on a round robin, don't you?"

"A round robin? How does it work?"

"Helen and Ethel Brown and the Honorary Member and Dorothy will be here in Rosemont, Margaret will be in Glen Point, Della in New York, you at Fort Myer and we boys at Harvard and Yale and the Boston Tech. Helen is going to start a letter on the first day of each month. She'll tell us what she's been doing. Ethel Brown will add on a bit; so will Dicky and Dorothy. It will go to Margaret. She'll put in a big batch of Glen Point news and send it in town to Della. When she has finished she'll send it on to Tom at New Haven, and in course of time it will reach Roger and me in Boston and Cambridge and we'll send it on to you in Washington."

"That will be perfectly great!" exclaimed Ethel.

"You can illustrate it with kodaks, and we'll all know what every one of us is doing all the time."

"That was Aunt Daisy's idea. She thought we'd all like to keep together in some way even if we couldn't have our Saturday meetings."

"Isn't she splendid!" ejaculated Ethel Blue, and at that instant she felt that she was far richer than ever before in her life.

The morning of the breakfast proved to be clear and not too frost-filled for comfort.

"We really hardly need the glass," Mrs. Smith said as she and Dorothy examined the terrace at an early hour.

"It was safer to have it, though," answered Dorothy. "It might have rained and it never would have done to have the bride take cold. Now we can have the sashes open and the fire will take off the chill. It's a great combination."

Mrs. Smith agreed that it was, and went on with her scrutiny of the table.

When the guests arrived at nine o'clock, which was the very latest moment permitted them by Roger, they found the sun shining merrily on silver and glass and china, twinkling as if it were in the secret of the jokes that Helen and Roger had up their sleeves. Mr. Emerson had sent over his car for the Hancocks, for the Doctor's car was too small to convey the entire family.

"It does my heart good to see Richard so radiant," said Mrs. Morton to her sister-in-law as Captain Morton ran down the steps to help his *fiancée*.

" I believe the best part of his life is before him," Mrs. Smith answered softly, a smile on her lips.

The hostess sat at one end of the table and Dorothy at the other. In the middle of one side was Helen, the president of the United Service Club, and in the middle of the other, Ethel Blue, the secretary and departing member. Mingled with the other club members were Mr. and Mrs. Emerson, who had contributed so greatly to the Club's pleasure during the preceding year, and Dr. and Mrs. Hancock, relatives of to-morrow's bride. The hour was too early for Mr. and Mrs. Watkins to come out from New York, but they telephoned their good wishes and congratulations while the meal was in progress.

It was a simple breakfast but everything was good both to eat and to look at. It began with fruit, of which there were several kinds, and continued with a well-cooked cereal.

" None of your five minute cereals for me," smiled Mrs. Smith. " I always have even the short-time ones cooked at least twice as long as they are reputed to need. It brings out their flavor better."

After the cereal with its rich cream came chops for the meat eaters and individual *omelettes soufflés,* as light as a feather, for the egg eaters. The coffee was clear and turned to a warm gold when the cream worked its magic upon it. Broiled fresh mushrooms with bacon brought it all to an end.

" Just the kind of muffins I like best," Ethel Brown said in a undertone to Dorothy.

"Potatoes from our own farm," announced the hostess.

"All praise to Dorothy, the farmer," hailed Mr. Emerson.

"Mostly to Roger," protested Dorothy. "He managed the vegetable end of our planting."

Helen tapped on her glass.

"This will be the last meeting of all the members of the U. S. C.," she said, "because Ethel Blue and the boys are going away."

A shade fell over the faces of all those around the table.

"We who are left at home here are going to keep it up, so that there'll always be a Club for the wanderers to come back to. And we're going to have a round robin fly about every month."

"Perhaps we'll all get together next summer in the holidays," suggested Tom.

"We'll try to," the president continued. "Now I want to ask you to drink in Aunt Louise's nice brown coffee to the health of the founder of the United Service Club. She is its secretary and to-day she is distinguished as being about to leave us for good."

They rapped the table and shouted Ethel Blue's name joyously. She sat with her head bowed, smiling.

"Speech, speech," cried Mr. Emerson.

"Thank you, thank you," replied Ethel Blue breathlessly. "I'm glad we've had the Club. It has been fun, although we've had to work pretty hard at it."

"You've made fun for others," said Mrs. Emerson. "You've lived up to your name — the United Service."

"I'd like to propose the health of the Club as a whole," said Mrs. Morton. "As a citizen of Rosemont I can repeat what has been said to me by other citizens, even if, as the mother of some of the members, I might be somewhat embarrassed to utter such praise. Rosemont thinks that the United Service Club has done more to stir up the town than any other organization it has ever had."

There was general applause from the grown-ups.

"I'd like to hear some of these undertakings," said Captain Morton. "Won't some one recite them?"

"O, Father, I wrote you all about them when each one came off," objected Ethel Blue.

"Uncle Richard will hear what some of them are when we give out our prizes," said Helen. "We've decided to give prizes for certain especial successes. Ethel Brown, for instance, will be so good as to rise and receive a reward for reciting more poems than we ever knew could be learned by one small brain."

Ethel Brown rose and received, while the rest applauded, a small sieve.

"Why a sieve?" inquired Margaret.

"The sieve is symbolic. Ethel takes in verse through her eyes and lets it out through her lips just like a sieve."

After the laughter subsided, Helen continued:

"Our next prize is for Grandfather Emerson, who

supplied Ethel Brown with much of the material with which she has favored us."

Mr. Emerson was decorated with a miniature well and pump.

"I suppose this is the fount of English undefiled on which I drew," he commented.

The president went on with her distribution. The jokes were all mild but for the Club members each had its meaning. James received a small pair of crutches, because he was the only one who had broken a leg.

"I'm glad it wasn't scissors," said his father. "He might be led into cutting corners again."

Dorothy received a pink tin containing a cake with pink icing — all by way of recognition of her love of cooking and of pink. Roger's gift was a set of collar and cuffs made from paper "dirt bands" and adorned with cuff buttons and a cravat of dazzling beauty.

"A man of fashion and a farmer combined," Helen announced.

Dicky received a watering can, by way of indicating his fondness for getting into trouble with water. A fan went to Della "for next summer's use." Tom had a little Roman soldier as a reminder of his representation of one of the Great Twin Brethren. Margaret's offering was a tiny Christmas Ship containing needles and a spool of thread. Helen gave herself a doll's coat like the one which she and Margaret had copied in great numbers for the war orphans. Ethel Blue's gift was a real present — a travelling

case fitted with the necessaries of a journey. This came from all the members of the Club.

"You're just too dear," whispered Ethel Blue, too overcome to speak.

They drowned her voice in a burst of chatter, so that she might not burst into tears.

"I have a few gifts left," said Helen, "and I'd like to give them out by acclamation. Whose tires have we worn until they were almost worn out and yet *she* has never tired?"

"Grandmother Emerson," came the ringing answer, and Helen ran around to her grandmother's chair and gave her a toy automobile.

"Who made the most box furniture for Rose House?"

"Roger," shouted James at the top of his lungs, while at the same moment Roger cried "James." The others, having been instructed to keep silent, concluded that the question was settled for them.

"Roger *and* James," decreed Helen, presenting each of them with a knife.

"Who are our high-flyers?"

"The Ethels," every one said promptly, for the Ethels were the only ones present who had been up in an aeroplane.

A tiny flyer was given to each of them.

So it went on until the supply of parcels in Helen's basket was exhausted.

"Now, to wind up with," Helen said, "I want to thank Uncle Richard for giving us the very finest kind of present," and she waved her hand across the

table to Miss Daisy, whose shining eyes and glowing cheeks told of her delight in all she had seen. "Uncle Richard is taking away Ethel Blue, but he's giving us an aunt. We love her already and we think we've all won a prize in her."

"Ah, no," exclaimed Miss Daisy, slipping one hand into Ethel Blue's and laying the other on Captain Morton's shoulder. "It is I who have won a prize — a double prize!"

THE END

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